PEACE ON EARTH

VERSUS ANOTHER WORLD WAR

J. C. McFEETERS, D. D.

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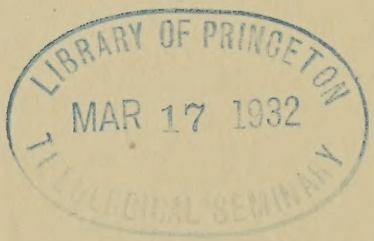

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PEACE ON EARTH

VERSUS ANOTHER WORLD-WAR

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PEACE ON EARTH

VERSUS ANOTHER WORLD-WAR

BY

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"THE COVENANTERS IN AMERICA"
"SKETCHES OF THE COVENANTERS"
"THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH"
"AMERICA IN THE COMING CRISIS"

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TO THE FRIENDS OF JESUS AND LOVERS OF PEACE, WITH A FULL ASSURANCE THAT A BRIGHT FUTURE AWAITS OUR WORLD, THIS BOOK IS CORDIALLY INSCRIBED

"FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN,
UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN,
AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER!
AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL,
COUNSELOR, THE MIGHTY GOD,
THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE.
OF THE INCREASE OF HIS GOVERNMENT
AND PEACE THERE SHALL BE NO END."

Isaiah 9:6.

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	1
I	
Peace on Earth is Assured	5
II	
Jesus, The Prince of Peace	15
III	
Government Centralized in Jesus	28
IV	
The Nations Decline the Authority of Jesus	44
V	
Rejecting Jesus Handicaps the World	61
VI	
Rejecting Jesus Tends Toward Chaotic Conditions	75

CONTENTS

VII

The Lord's Controversy with the Nations 90

VIII

World Safety Requires Radical Action .. 109

IX

America and the World Court 128

X

A Larger Programme for the World's Safety 139

XI

The Final Downfall of all Incorrigible Nations 149

XII

The Re-Construction of Society 163

XIII

Appeal 175

FOREWORD

The Book of The Revelation is God's chart of time. The contents reveal the outstanding events between the first century, A. D., and the end of the world.

The Revelation is the people's own book; it should be read and studied by all. A blessing is pronounced in the first chapter, and likewise in the last, upon all who read and keep "the sayings of the prophecy of this book." They who neglect the book forfeit the double benediction.

The Revelation is hard to understand. This is the reason usually given for its neglect. May not this be a subterfuge for the indolent mind? Too deep to be fathomed? Too high to be climbed? Very true; yet the sheep and the lambs can graze in the green pastures found in the coves and on the foot-hills.

The reader finds on the first page of The Revelation a life-like portrait of the glorified Jesus; a magnificent frontis piece. This gives inspiration to go forward.

Then the blue curtain of heaven is withdrawn by

an unseen hand, and, lo, a view of the eternal throne; the splendor is terrible. The throne is surrounded by holy angels and ransomed saints, all happy and active in the presence of God the Father and Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Such a view of Jesus, arrayed in royal robes and crowned with authority and dignity, is well worth all the time and pains we can give to The Revelation.

Jesus is seen as He occupies, influentially and officially, the center of the universe. He created all; He upholds all; He governs all.

We are kindly permitted, in the vision, to take our stand beside Jesus, and from His view-point behold His vast empire. We get a synthetic vision of His mighty operations, all progressing through much conflict toward the intended ultimate.

We become impressed with Jesus in His management of our world, as He moves with unfaltering step and irresistible power toward His grand objective,—the New Heaven and the New Earth. Such a grasp of the situation gives the mind a wonderful sense of peace and safety and leads to greater consecration and higher service.

The Revelation clearly shows a violent conflict in progress between Jesus and the devil for the con-

quest of this world. The conflict deepens as the ages pass.

In the latter part of this book of visions, many salient events in the struggle stand out in bold relief. One crisis follows another in rapid and alarming succession. The interested reader is profoundly impressed; the heart learns solemn lessons; life becomes serious and dignified.

While we watch the movements of providence as described in The Revelation, a military panorama of awsome magnificence passes before our eyes. The battle of Armageddon distresses the whole world; then follows the disturbance of finance and commerce among the nations; many powers form a strong alliance against Christ and His Church; the challenge is accepted with a shout of enthusiasm in confidence of victory; a solemn covenant unifies the people of God for the mighty struggle. Then the Lord Jesus appears with terrible suddenness as the Commander of the Christian forces; the last of all wars is fought, in which the devil and his hosts are overthrown; society, seriously wrecked by the war, is re-constructed on the basis of God's will; the millennium is inaugurated with peace, righteousness and prosperity for the whole world; the thousand years fill the world with prosperous nations

and happy people; the devil, released from his prison, leads in a post-millennial apostasy; Jesus comes in visible form, occupies a great white throne, resurrects the dead and passes judgment upon all the descendants of Adam; the New Heaven and New Earth supersede the old in magnificence and splendor far beyond human comprehension. What momentous events! Their thunder even now is audible, as they speed down upon the world in terrific succession with appalling effect.

We have endeavored to follow God's own line of thought is preparing this little volume. Doubtless imperfections are apparent; errors may be discovered; but we trust the thoughtful reader will overlook the faults and grasp the central fact. The glorious Lord Jesus on the Throne that rules the universe is the prime attraction; the charm of the Revelation is the Office that manages the world.

May the Lord Jesus bless the message presented in this little volume, and use it according to His own pleasure for the glory of His name, and the peace and comfort of His people.

J. C. McFeeters.

Parnassus, Pa.,
April 2, 1926.

PEACE ON EARTH

VERSUS ANOTHER WORLD-WAR

I

PEACE ON EARTH IS ASSURED

> God hath sworn by the immutability of His own word, that the kingdom and the greatness of the power under the whole heaven shall be given unto Christ; and through whatever conflict and calamity the human family may pass to the fulfilment of the prophecy, the night shall not outlive the morn.
>
> —Daniel March, D. D.

At present the prospect of peace on earth is dark. The darkness is like a night overhung with clouds; more lightning points than visible stars.

Many argue that peace in our world is an impossibility; it cannot be reasonably expected; nor is it a thing to be desired. Racial ambition and antipathy breed war as surely as seed corn yields a har-

vest. National development and expansion will ever produce questions that must be settled by the sword. The heroic in the human heart demands the battle-field as the arena for its highest expression. The natural increase of the world's inhabitants must be kept within bounds by wholesale slaughter.

After this manner the lovers of war philosophize. But they fail to take into account the all controlling factor of God's good-will to the human race; His grace which is sufficient and efficient to mollify all hearts; His Holy Spirit who is able to regenerate the world. The Lord has promised and prophesied peace; therefore it is coming; our troubled earth will not be disappointed.

The Bible is our authority for believing that a golden age awaits this war-ridden world. By consulting it, and it alone, we can speak with certainty. The predictions found in the Word of God afford the only reliable information on the subject. The Bible, like a telescope, brings to light a future period of peace for all nations; a period clear as the sky without clouds, bright as the sun at noontide, mild and beautiful as a May morning.

Not by the trend of events as visualized by man can we be assured of the future. Not by studying the political powers and tracing their plans and

charts can we discover what is ahead. To the Book of God we turn for light. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."*

Our world, by the will of God, is heir to an inheritance of peace; peace extending through long centuries; peace without menace by a drawn sword or mounted gun in any land; peace without interruption for thirty generations at least. The dove of peace is on the wing in this direction with the olive branch in its mouth, facing adverse winds and surviving cruel storms; it will not be driven back.

God accompanied the birth of Jesus, His Son, with a special message of peace. A choir of angels, temporarily released from service in heaven, that they might celebrate Christ's incarnation on earth, hovered over a Judean pasture-field and sang the natal song,—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."†

That song was more than an outburst of seraphic joy; more than an expression of eager desire and ardent hope. It was a prophecy; a prediction of universal peace; a certification of tranquility and blessedness awaiting all nations. The announce-

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* Isa. 8:20. † Luke 2:14.

ment by the angels will have sure fulfilment in the reign of Jesus, born that night in the town of Bethlehem.

The prophet Isaiah, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, saw that resplendent age afar off in vision. Nor did the seer permit what he saw to electrify merely his own brain and thrill his own soul. As a skilful penman he gave it permanency for the comfort and inspiration of future generations. No prediction can be found more lucid and definite. Thus he wrote,—

"And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." ‡

Peace on earth is hereby assured; international peace has been decreed by the highest authority; universal peace has been determined by Him who is almighty and unchangeable. All nations shall disarm; their hosts must be mustered out. The Supreme Arbiter has thus decided; from His decision there is no appeal.

God's Word illuminates the future, making this

‡ Isa. 2:4.

event clear and conspicuous. We may not know when the bright morning will dawn; we may not see what lies between this and that; but of the fact we can entertain no doubt. With grateful hearts we can praise the Lord for the predicted peace even before the faintest rays streak the horizon.

Isaiah saw another sight, equally marvelous and convincing. He saw the Church of Christ ascending to the place of first importance on earth. The Holy Spirit descended upon her membership with great power; they became distinguished for moral and spiritual excellence. Jesus Christ, no longer hidden behind artistic and elaborate rituals, was gloriously manifest in His Church, in her people and her services. The Church offered the people just what they needed, and the people appreciated what was offered,—a living Saviour, a powerful Gospel, a spiritual feast, an increasing life, a triumphant joy,—everything needed to enlarge and satiate the immortal soul.

Therefore the multitudes came from all quarters, pressing upon her and "flowing" into her, like a river overflowing its banks. Her work, in the Lord Jesus, had become a grand success; the evangelization of the world had become a reality. The prophet's eye caught the vision,—in a rapture of gladness

he exclaimed, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." §

The Church is the power Jesus will use to bring peace to our war-wasted world. The Church, in the name of the Son of God, will yet awake to the tragedy of our times; she will arise in the might of Jesus and cast out of the nations the demon of war. The Church, endued and filled with the Holy Spirit, will exhibit the riches of the love of God and employ the power of Christ to win the world for Jesus. The victory will be complete and Jesus shall have the glory.

Intervening events may try men's souls; strong hearts may tremble for fear of the things that are coming upon the earth; * war clouds may skirt the sky; storms, dark and destructive, may sweep the earth, yet peace is pledged; the world some day

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§ Isa. 2.2. * Luke 21:26.

will be tranquil and happy. A bright light arises beyond the darkness; the eye of faith beholds the radiant morning. The bright vision makes the heart strong; optimism abounds when the ultimate is known and God is trusted.

The Lord still holds the reins of government notwithstanding appearances to the contrary. The universal throne is His; He will never abdicate. The indestructible kingdom is His; He will never abandon it. All countries are His; all peoples are His; all their interests are His. "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, all souls are mine; † the silver and the gold is mine." ‡ The Lord has position, power and means to accomplish His purpose; therefore the peace He has announced will not fail to materialize.

The Golden age will not prove a mirage. Mankind is on the march to the promised land; they shall enter in. The reign of righteousness will become a universal verity; a renovated world will become a glorious realization; the nations will not fail to possess the goodly inheritance. Even now in anticipation they might make the welkin ring with shouts of victory. The Holy Spirit will

† Ezekiel 18:4. ‡ Hag. 2:8.

descend upon all lands, like summer showers, filling the brain of man with the mind of God, and the heart of man with the love of Jesus; and then shall we have peace.

O earth, rejoice thou in Jesus thy King! His word and power are pledged to give thee peace. The happy time is coming when thy fertile fields shall no more be blasted with shot and shell, nor thy soil crimsoned with the precious blood of thy sons. The day approaches when thy treasures shall not be wasted on military preparations, nor thy talents spent in cruel warfare. From that day henceforth, no more messages from battle-fields to pierce the hearts and drench the cheeks at home.

The ghastly battle-field! What a sight for the eyes of men or angels! How horrifying to contemplate! The thought makes the heart sick. What mortal anguish when loved ones hear of the battle in which sons, brothers, husbands, fathers have fallen!

The battle-field! Strewn with the slaughtered and crimson with their blood, what a scene! what a horror for loving hearts to ponder! There the victims lie; some calm in death; others in the last agonies; some groaning and some praying; some beholding heaven open to receive their spirits; some

without faith in Jesus or knowledge of salvation through His sacrifice on the cross.

Yesterday all were hale and whole; every heart throbbed with high hope and defiant valor. Every man was animated with the thought of victory; then the pleasant vision of home-coming and long years of prosperous business and happy life. How sudden, how frightful, how lamentable the change!

Just a few fleeting years have passed since the mothers of these men were cherishing their innocent babes, gazing with tender love into their smiling faces, dreaming of long years and noble manhood, thrift and honor for every one of them. Now the hopes are dashed; the hearts are bleeding; the homes are darkened; there has been a battle.

Recently the hearts of young lovers were joyful and their faces radiant, anticipating peace, pleasure and plenty in their own home, each with the companion of his choice. How in a moment the bright vision has vanished! The hearth-fires will never be kindled. The bereaved are left un-mated, unwed, unloved by those in whose love they lived and laughed, and sang and wept; there has been a battle. O the horrors of the battlefield!

How glad our world will be when the clash of arms and the thunder of battles have ceased! Sor-

row and sighing shall flee away. § God's Word is the guarantee of a golden, peaceful future. The world will yet bask in the genial light of the Sun of Righteousness and enjoy a thousand years of uninterrupted tranquility under the reign of Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace. Then will the former sorrows be forgotten because of the exceeding joy.

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§ Isa. 35:10.

II

JESUS, THE PRINCE OF PEACE

> Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him that name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
>
> —The Apostle Paul.

Jesus is called "THE PRINCE OF PEACE." This title is gracefully mentioned by the prophet Isaiah. Other terms of honor are added, each radiant with uncreated glory. The prophet says, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."† This Jesus is the Eternal Son of God, ‡ incarnate in the Son of Mary, the blessed virgin. §

How excessive the splendours of the appellations by which Jesus, the great Prince, is known! How expressive of His true greatness and innate majesty!

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* Phil. 2:9. † Isa. 9:6. ‡ Matt. 3:17. § Luke 2:7.

The human mind is dazzled with the brightness of the Lord's Glory; ¶ in His presence the angels veil their faces. ** What can be said of no other man may be said of Jesus,—"Truly this is the Son of God." Let the lips that speak of the Prince of Peace be graced with humility; let the pen that writes be fed from the heart-fountain.

The expression, Prince of Peace, suggests personal attributes and qualities ranging from the lofiest dignity to the lowliest humility. "Prince" implies majesty; "peace" implies modesty. In Jesus we find sublimeness and lowliness, powerfulness and harmlessness, comprehensiveness and minuteness. Yea in this Prince all Divine perfections center and all human excellencies unite. Goodness to the extreme and greatness supreme, in every variation, dwell in Him and glorify His life.

Exalted, yet friendly; almighty, yet tender; inflexible, yet pathetic; unchangeable, yet pliable; administering justice, yet abounding in mercy; glorious in holiness, yet patient with sinners; fearful in praises, yet listening to the lisping child. What a wonderful combination of rarest traits finds expression in the life of Jesus the Prince of Peace!

¶ John 1:14. ** Isa. 6:2.

How admirably qualified to take the government and rule the world!

In every princely quality Jesus is incomparable and incomprehensible. "He is the chiefest among ten thousand." * Chief among ten thousand princes, ten thousand counselors, ten thousand captains, ten thousand friends, ten thousand lovers. He is chiefest among all; rises above all in matchless dignity and with graceful poise. "To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." †

The world, to its own discredit and inconceivable loss, fails to recognize Jesus in His unapproachable glory; an outstanding character in society; independent of all created beings, yet related to all; above them in authority; beyond them in range of action; among them in the administration of law; caring for them as Superintendent of human affairs. This Prince of Peace is "pre-eminent in all things," ‡ and yet the world knows Him not.

Jesus, in His personality and activities, is often mentioned under metaphors drawn from the human organism. "His eyes run to and fro through all the earth;" § "His ears are open to the cry of distress;" ¶ "His arm is stretched out against evil;" ¶¶ "His

* Song. 5:10. † Isa. 40:25. ‡ Col. 1:18. § Zec. 4:10. ¶ II Sam. 22:7. ¶¶ Jer. 21:5.

voice rends the cedars and makes the forest tremble." **

The operations of His power are frequently noted. He watereth the hills; He maketh the grass to grow; He toucheth the mountains and they smoke; He casts forth His lightnings; He stilleth the noise of the seas, and the tumult of the people; He guides the stars in their courses, He knoweth their number, He calleth them all by their names. * And yet the nations are blind to Jesus as their Prince and Saviour; they respect not His superlative greatness; nor do they consider His adapability to their condition and need.

The Word of God employs definite language and striking symbols to impress the princely personality and presence of Jesus upon the public. He is designated as "Almighty God," "The Lord of hosts," "Shepherd of Israel," "King of nations," † "King of glory," "King of kings and Lord of lords." But the world will not listen; the powers will not respect His high office.

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is the supreme authority in the administration of civil affairs on earth. He is related to the rulers of every nation as their

** Psa. 29:5. * Psa. 147:4. † Jer. 10:7.

Sovereign. The rulers are intrusted with Christ's subjects, have in charge their material interests and are held accountable as their administrators.

Jesus is "a great King over all the earth." ‡ "He is Judge: He putteth down one and setteth up another." §

The wisdom of men, in their efforts to rule this world irrespective of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, has ever proved to be pernicious folly. They persist in administering government on a material basis,—the will of God as a dominant factor is excluded. Maladministration of power is the never failing result. Self-interest, corrupt politics, oppressive policies, infectious crimes, obstruction and destruction prevail, until the powers rock in the throes of revolution, or are buried in their own ruins. Moral miasma infects the atmosphere and sickens society. Thus the nations forfeit the Lord's favor and incur His displeasure; they perish in their own moral putrefaction. Behold Chaldea, Israel, Egypt, Rome and many others, whose overthrow is a warning to modern nations.

Let them take heed; the same road today will bring the same ruin tomorrow.

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‡ Psa. 47:2. § Psa. 75:7.

Where conviction of the majesty of God ends, there moral insanity begins. When the public grows oblivious to the Lord's presence, clouds of darkness gather. When respect for Jesus, the Prince of Peace, ceases and His authority makes no impression, the day of reckoning cannot be far away. Under such circumstances, immorality knows no shame, the tide of wickedness rises, the very foundations of government tremble, the wrath of the Lord begins to burn, the life of the nation is in jeopardy.

Such conditions arising, the Lord Jesus, the world's Supreme Ruler, will not fail to champion the waning cause of righteousness. Jesus is quite capable. This Lamb of God is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah. * When necessity arises, He puts on "the garment of vengeance, and is clad with zeal as with a cloak. According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay." †

The Prince of Peace can exhibit military fitness when a battle is to be fought for the sake of righteousness. Because of His exploits at the Red Sea, in the overthrow of Pharaoh and his army, He was placed on record as "a man of war." ‡

This mighty Prince has been entrusted with the

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* Rev. 5:5: † Isa. 59:17. ‡ Exo. 15:3.

work of pacifying the world. How stupendous the task! Yet he cheerfully accepted it from the Father, fully aware of the difficulties involved. Conscious of His own infinite power, He faints not; inexhaustible in personal resources, He is never discouraged. All the forces and treasures in the universe are officially at His command for this service; therefore He never hesitates. Ultimate success without a shadow of doubt awaits Him. The nations will yet be pacified; good-will among men will yet prevail throughout the world. "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth." §

Since the days of the apostles, Jesus has been employed on this gigantic enterprise. The real campaign for the conquest of the world began with His coronation in heaven. Results thus far appear disappointing. Perhaps the world has never been more demonized than now; the war spirit among men has never been more deceitful, more desperate, more diabolical and more universal than at present. Hateful passions sway the nations as storms sway the trees of the forest. Yet Jesus, the Prince of

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§ Isa. 42:4.

Peace, holds steadily to His undertaking. He has His own plan and hews to the line.

The Prince of Peace knows how to restore peace on the bed-rock of righteousness; peace on fundamental principles; peace that will endure. This is His purpose; to this He is committed; in this He is making progress. Though his plans require ages and involve sacrifices, the result will justify both the time and the cost. His thoughts are not our thoughts, nor His ways our ways. He removes the rude shacks of government erected by man independent of Him; He condemns the secular basis of statesmanship constructed by human wisdom. Then on the rock foundation of Divine authority He proceeds to build a structure that will survive the severest tests of time.

The Prince of Peace astonishes us by saying, "I am come to send fire upon the earth; and what will I if it be already kindled?" ¶ Jesus came to send fire upon the earth! Fire consumes; a conflagration is frightful. And Jesus, while he was yet speaking, knew that the flames were already started,—flames that would sweep the earth to its remotest bounds.

Jesus saw His teachings enter men's souls, firing

¶ Luke 12:49.

them with zeal, making them earnest, purposeful, unconquerable; ready to sacrifice their substance, their homes, their lives in the cause of God and righteousness. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." * Gospel truth, when clearly perceived and duly appreciated, makes life strong, love vehement, effort strenuous, hope enthusiastic; self-sacrifice for Jesus becomes a surpassing joy.

Such is the fire that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, kindles. The world cannot endure the purifying flame. Evil doers strenuously oppose the reformation and renovation of public life. Such a process might cost them their place and power in government; worldly policies and principles would perish in the fire; society would be melted and the dross removed; the self-interested would be unseated; the public spirited would be empowered in their stead.

This accounts for the fierce persecutions frequently launched against the Church of Christ. Desperate and numerous have been the attempts to

* Heb. 11:37.

quench the holy flames. Torrents of innocent blood have been poured upon the fire that Jesus has kindled, yet all in vain. Christian heroes never fail when martyrs are needed. They are willing to suffer in a fiery persecution, rather than let the world perish in moral putrefaction.

But we are even more disturbed when the Prince of Peace says, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I am not come to send peace, but a sword." † How explain such war-like words dropping from the gracious lips of Jesus. "He came not to destroy, but to save?" ‡ The explanation may not be difficult if we search in the right direction and with an honest heart. The commission Jesus received from the Father makes it clear.

This world, when committed to Jesus for pacification, was in rank rebellion against God. The nations were incensed at the enthronement of Jesus over them as their King. They disclaimed His authority, crying out, in contempt and rage, "We will not have this man to reign over us." § They plotted His overthrow; determined His death and accomplished their purpose. He was crucified and buried. His was a strange and marvelous death;

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† Matt. 10:34. ‡ Luke 9:56. § Luke 19:14.

the tomb could contain Him; but it would not retain Him, nor yet detain Him a moment beyond His own good pleasure. ¶ Ere the sun had risen twice, the Prince of Peace rose out of the sleep of death and clothed Himself with the power of an endless life. Again His face was seen among the living, His voice was heard, His work was resumed.

His disciples were quickly advanced to positions of power and authority, and were accredited to represent Him on earth. They were instructed to offer mercy to the guilty world; pardon to the people whose hands were red with His precious blood. * But the nations spurned His Gospel, scorned His terms of peace, ridiculed His good-will. Then spake the Father after this manner, "Thou art on the throne; they are in Thy power; break them with a rod of iron; dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel; bring them to terms." †

The Prince was assigned a stupendous task. Who is not amazed at such a work assigned to the peaceful Prince? Does it not seem to be diametrically opposed to His commission as the Saviour of the world? ‡

But Jesus did not for a moment shirk the service.

¶ Rom. 14:9. * Luke 24:47. † Psa. 2:9. ‡ John 3:17.

He began with resolute purpose; He has continued without interruption; He will go forward till it is finished. The tide of battle has ebbed and flowed; but the victory, though delayed, has never been in doubt. The Lord knows the end from the beginning; also men of faith live in assurance of the conquest that will bring peace and happiness to the world.

Jesus, after He had risen from the dead, called His faithful band together, eleven in number, and started His campaign for the conquest of the world.§ The truth was their only weapon. They preached the Gospel of peace and salvation; they offered a free and full pardon; they declared the Lord's ultimatum. They were resisted by the world powers; their offers were despised. The opposition was overwhelming. But the servants of Jesus could not withdraw; neither could they compromise. They could die, but they could not retreat.

Their appeals of love were met with the sword. ¶ The messengers of Jesus fell in their own blood, slain by the enemies of the Prince of Peace. Worthy successors stepped forward and quickly filled the gaps. They were unconquerable; their numbers

§ Luke 24:49. ¶ Acts 12:2.

rapidly increased; their power became mighty.

With each successive generation the tide of Christianity rose; and it still rises. The Gospel hosts, under the banner of Jesus, are marching onward. Where the Prince of Peace leads they gladly go. They are determined and destined to bring the world to Christ.

To the Prince of Peace be glory, and power, and dominion. "His name shall endure forever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed." *

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* Psa. 72:17.

III

GOVERNMENT CENTRALIZED IN JESUS

Ring and swing,
Bells of joy! on morning's wing
Send the song of praise abroad!
With a sound of broken chains
Tell the nations that He reigns,
Who alone is Lord and God."

—Whittier.

Jesus has reached the zenith of power. There He abides, never to retire. He is the mightiest Ruler in the Universe. In all things and everywhere He has the pre-eminence. †

Thus the Father rewarded His Son for His sacrifice on the cross. Christ's death on the cross was extreme humiliation; His throne at the right hand of the Father in heaven is extreme exaltation. "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him." ‡

Jesus, after His resurrection, said unto His disciples concerning His promotion to the highest seat

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† Col. 1:18. ‡ Phil. 2:8.

of honor, "All authority is given unto Me in heaven and on earth." §

Paul, getting a glimpse of the sovereignty and dominion of Jesus, exclaimed in a spirit of rapturous delight, "God hath given Him the name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." ¶

Jesus in His exaltation incites the mind to high thinking. Nothing more fascinating than to follow the Lord's path, as He passeth through the heavens, * and see Him rewarded with highest honors for performing the greatest service. Zacchaeus climbed a tree to see Jesus pass by; † will not we gird up the loins of our minds and climb the sky to get a view of our Lord in His high office and matchless majesty? The discovery of Jesus in His unapproachable glory will be an invigorating tonic to our sickly souls, a cure for spiritual lethargy.

A view of the attributes and activities of this mighty Sovereign, as He rules the universe and redeems the world, is enough to inspire life with

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§ Matt. 28:18. ¶ Phil. 2:9. * Heb. 4:14. † Luke 19:2.

noblest motives and cheer the heart with sublimest optimism.

Such excursions and experiences require effort. The sluggish soul will never make the journey. Human thought must soar to reach the enthroned Lord. Drones never soar. And yet the excessive strain is well worth while. The intellect is thereby expanded and dignified; the heart is purified and exalted,—becomes fervent with happiest emotions and aflame with the love of God. The mind that attempts the flight, and repeats the attempt, is exhilarated and glorified. The soul finds its wings, scents its native atmosphere, almost loses itself in the power and joy of the Holy Spirit by whom it ascends. The horizon grows wider, the earth smaller, heaven larger, nearer and brighter. How rich the experience, when able to say after such an effort, "I found Him whom my soul loveth." How excessive the joy, when the ascension is a success and the soul returns, saying, "I have been with Jesus today in the heavenly places.‡

Christ's exaltation is not merely honorary; He is decorated with no empty titles. His seat of power is a seat of service. It is official in the noblest

‡ Eph. 2:6.

sense; exacting on Himself to the extreme; beneficial to others to the highest degree.

The office which Jesus occupies is essential to the peace and security of our world. The work is progressive; its intenseness and benificence deepen and broaden with the ages, like the flow of a mighty river. "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." §

The office of our Lord Jesus, being the very climax of authority, imposes upon Him weightiest responsibilities. The administration of law and justice, the exercise of discipline and mercy, the distribution of rewards and the enforcement of penalties, throughout God's vast empire, is merely a part of the service accepted with the office. "Thou hast set Him over the works of Thy hands." ¶

Jesus occupies the throne not for posing but for serving. He is Lord of all that He may serve all. He serves all that they may fit into the plan of His kingdom to the glory of God His Father. * He came into the world, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." † And He ascended up to heaven both to render and to receive service. "For the Lamb that is on the throne shall feed them, and shall lead

§ Isa. 9:7. ¶ Heb. 2:7. * I Cor. 10:31. † Mark 10:45.

them unto living fountains of waters." ‡ "And His servants shall serve Him." § They who yield to His will and accept His service make life a great success; they who assert their independence of Jesus, and follow their own heart, end their days in darkness and disappointment. "Walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." ¶

All people on earth are subjects of the greatest King; "All souls are mine." * Obedience to Jesus wins for them the best He can do and the most He can give for their well-being and comfort; disobedience forfeits all. "They would none of My counsel; they despised all My repoof. Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." †

It is evident therefore that every created being is under the authority of Jesus; no person or power can pass beyond His jurisdiction. All are dependent upon Him for their existence, protection, support, guidance in duty and ultimate destiny. All are intended for His service,—to receive the service He renders, and to render the service He requires.

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‡ Rev. 7:17. § Rev. 22:3. ¶ Isa. 50:11. * Ezek. 18:4. † Prov. 1:30.

"All things were created by Him and for Him." ‡

The Father, in the conveyance of all things to His Son, made special reference to the nations. He left them no possible ground to claim exemption from the jurisdiction of Jesus Christ. On this point the Word of God is explicit. Nothing in the Bible is more emphasized than Christ's kingship over the nations. Their aptness to exclude themselves was evidently foreseen and conclusively met. Hence the specific clause written into the Father's grant to the Son,—"Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." §

Jesus has the title deed and sole right to each and every nation on the face of the earth. They are His, both small and great, by the Father's decree. No leeway is left for the powers to escape from the presence of Jesus; none can ever pass beyond the dominion of this royal Son of God. "Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket; and they are counted as the small dust of the balance." ¶

Thus by a specific act, the powers of government have been centralized in the Son by the Father; universal authority has been vested in Jesus by a

‡ Col. 1:16. § Psa. 2:8. ¶ Isa. 40:15.

decree that cannot be annulled; the administration of law has been committed unalterably to His trust. He has the oversight and control of all. The final appeal is with Him; by His decision they stand or fall. "God is Judge; He putteth down one and setteth up another." *

All nations are thus related to Jesus, their Supreme Governor. In this relationship they are neither graded nor classified. Jesus knows no favorites; officially all are alike to Him, though morally they may differ. He is no respecter of persons or nations. "For He hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined their times and their bounds, that they should seek the Lord." †

The centralization of the government of the world has been the dream of the ages. It stirred the brain of Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar, Caesar, Napoleon, Wilhelm and many others. The advance thought of our day proposes the World Court as a substitute, hoping thereby to have a central office sufficiently powerful and effective to promote peace and abolish war throughout the world. But that august judiciary, as at present founded and

* Psa. 75:7. † Acts 17:26.

functioned independent of Jesus, has a dark outlook. Without Jesus, failure is inevitable. Only through the wisdom of Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor, will the counsel of the world prove sufficient. Only by honoring Him as Supreme among the judges can the decisions of the court have power to harmonize the nations and stabilize their governments. Only as an institution established in the name of Jesus and by His authority, and functioning according to His will, can the World Court expect to succeed. Jesus has said, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing." ‡ This maxim is large enough to include nations and all their tribunals.

The desire for a Central Court, an international clearing house, is certainly in the right direction. The effort to harmonize the powers by deliberation rather than by mobilization is most commendable. The methods of procedure, however, have hitherto prevented success. The human mind has long been groping in the dark for the ideal, but the goal has not yet been reached. Every effort has been abortive, resulting in confusion and disappointment. Jesus, the Central Power, without whom a nation can neither rise nor fall, has been shamefully over-

‡ John 15:5.

looked or wilfully excluded. All such attempts in ancient times have terminated in catastrophes. Will not the same evil course, in this age of Gospel light, involve in guilt greater and distress more direful than on any previous occasion? The Lord Jesus warns the people concerning a future calamity towering like a mountain above all other mountains, the very peak of retributive providence; trouble, the like of which has never been, neither shall it occur again. He says, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be." § Surely the nations need Jesus in their Supreme Court to guide them through the storm.

Notwithstanding the best service of the World Court, as it ministers to the nations on its present basis, the powers feel an irresistible suction toward a vortex of destruction. They shudder at the thought of another war surpassing in frightfulness all that has ever been. War still lurks amid future possibilities. Modern civilization is evidently approaching the test that may be its doom. Its overthrow may be necessary for the Christian Civilization which will bring the Millennium.

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§ Matt. 24:21.

The wisdom of the world, daring to set aside the wisdom of God, becomes pernicious folly and always results in desperate conditions. The civilization that will survive the coming storm must rest upon a solid foundation. That foundation is Jesus Christ, the Judge of all judges and Head over all courts and powers on earth. The authority of Jesus is the bed-rock for civil government; every other foundation is sand or muck; the superstructure built thereon will sink in the mud, ¶ or perish in the storm. *

The centralization of power in Jesus is essentially related to the unifying of the nations. Centralization presages and guarantees unification. They are connected as antecedent and consequent; they exist as cause and effect. Under the centralized power invested in Jesus and duly recognized by the nations, they will become united by attraction. They will be drawn to the center by a centripetal force they cannot resist and by mutual interests they will no longer ignore. They will come together under His winsome kindness and protecting care, as the little chickens gather under the wings of the mother hen. §

¶ Psa. 9:17. * Matt. 7:26. § Matt. 23:37.

How long ere the nations make the grand discovery that their unity and concord depend on Jesus, the Central Power? How long ere they, with universal accord and gladness, proclaim their relation to Him as their King and reap the harvest of harmony and happiness? How long ere the men in in power recognize the fact that they have no legitimate authority, except such as eminates from the throne of Jesus? How long ere they submit to the inevitable and admit that they are accountable to Jesus, the Potentate of the whole earth? ¶

The power centralized in Jesus is beneficent and practical to the utmost degree. The authority invested in Him is for the best interests of all people. Their greatest good is his great concern. Thus He glorifies the Father who commissioned Him to rule. "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth." *

Jesus is ever ready, from His central position, to bless the nations with peace, righteousness and prosperity. He only awaits their assent. Willingness on their part is a moral necessity. While averse to Jesus, they cannot reach highest success nor enjoy His reign. He has resources available and sufficient

¶ I Tim. 6:15. * Psa. 72:6.

to change the face of the earth and make it like Eden. He has showers of blessings to make the wilderness blossom as the rose.

When will the nations open their eyes and behold their outstanding privilege in Jesus? When will the rulers connect themselves and their governments with the infinitude of Divine goodness, and let the streams of life and blessedness flow down from the Central Power among the people? When they do their part, the Lord Jesus will not fail to do His. "Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us." † The present is a time teeming with sublimest possibilities for the nations. O that the great men were also wise! O that they could read the signs of the times and learn lessons from the skies! O that they would hearken to the Voice that comes from the Central Throne ere it wax louder and louder till the nations tremble and the foundations of government shake! ‡

Ye mighty men who rule the world, how long till ye relate the nations to Jesus Christ by constitutional law? Why not submit to His authority and obey His orders? Why not give glory to Him to whom ye must give account? Why not clear the

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† Psa. 67:6. ‡ Heb. 12:26.

way for Him to show the world the kindness of His favor, the abundance of His goodness, the blessedness of His reign? When will ye "prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God?" § O that ye would conform to the will of Almighty God! He has said, "To Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess." O that ye would recognize Jesus as the embodiment of civil authority! That ye would honor Him as the center of universal government! That ye would cease from worldly policies! They result only in vexation and disaster. Subordinate yourselves to the reign of Jesus, the "King of nations." ¶ Co-ordinate the powers under the Prince of Peace. Then look for results; they will quickly appear. The surprise will make the world sing for joy. Be loyal to the King of kings; put His government to the test. Then will the windows of heaven be opened; the blessings will come down till the world be filled.

Every other experiment in civil government has failed. Is not the Lord's method worth a trial? Wherefore has it no consideration in national cabinets and political conferences? Are not the mistakes that have drenched the earth with tears and soaked the soil of every land with blood enough to

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§ Isa. 40:3. ¶ Jer. 10:7.

startle the world's leaders? Why will they not swing their governments over to the administration of Jesus? "Put them in fear, O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men." *

The familiar epigram, "All just government is derived from the consent of the governed," may well be revised in the light of God's Word. All just government must of necessity be derived from the Just One, in whom all power is vested. Jesus, the Son of God, says,—"All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth." † The announcement is for the whole world.

Jesus challenges rivals;—"To whom will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." ‡ The people truly have power, but it is derivative, not initiative; subordinate, not absolute. "The powers that be are ordained of God." §

The governed have legitimate power to constitute government; yet only in the name of Jesus and subject to His authority. ¶ They have the right to formulate laws, erect offices, elect officers, constitute courts, hold assemblies and administer law; but only by the will of Jesus to whom they are responsible. Beyond this the rul-

* Psa. 9:20. † Matt. 28:18. ‡ Isa. 40:25. § Rom. 13:1. ¶ Psa. 20:5.

ers cannot go and be guiltless. To arrogate to themselves power that belongs to God is a dangerous experiment. "The Lord will not give His glory to another." ** His jealousy may long be suppressed, yet the heat is there; the consuming flame may flash at any moment. Then who will survive? "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." *

The policy that severs a nation from the Central Power is rebellion against the Lord. The safety of nations depends absolutely on right relation with Jesus. Oblivion is the fate of the wandering star. "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." † To filch power from Jesus is cowardice; to seize it is insurrection; to use it is open warfare against Almighty God. Let the guilty beware of the reprisals.

In the Lord's plan for the nations, all are equally under His supervision and care; none is preferred. Likewise all are co-related to each other; none is isolated. They constitute one great nationhood, a

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** Isa. 42:8. * Deut. 32:22. † Isa. 60:12.

family of nations, the "E Pluribus Unum" of the world.

IV

THE NATIONS DECLINE THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

> Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.‡
>
> The Prophet Jeremiah.

The centralization of government in Jesus is a certified fact. The Scriptures attest it: "Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet: for in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him." § God the Father proclaims it: "I will make Him My Firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth." ¶ Jesus Himself affirms it: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." * The insignia on His royal raiment heralds it: "He

‡ Jer. 2:12. § Heb. 2:8. ¶ Psa. 89:27. * Matt. 28:18.

hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."†

Under Jesus the nations have been incorporated, by an act of God the Father, into a World Union, though they know it not. Under His administration they constitute an association of powers, though they acknowledge it not. "For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the Governor among the nations." ‡

Jesus is the President of the United States of the World, the Chief Executive of the all-inclusive "E Pluribus Unum." "Who would not fear Thee, O King of nations?" §

In this Union all nations are directly related to the Central Power; all are subordinated to the Divine Ruler. Under Jesus each has its own place; to Him all are accountable. "By Me Kings reign, and princes decree justice. By Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." ¶

And yet these fundamental truths are admitted by none of the powers; these vital facts are officially recognized neither by courts nor cabinets. The Universal Governor finds poor favor with kings and governments; the nations refuse to adjust them-

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† Rev. 19:16. ‡ Psa. 22:28. § Jer. 10:7. ¶ Prov. 8:15.

selves to His requirements; they will not submit to His authority. "Wherefore say My people: "We are lords; we will come no more unto Thee." †

O that they were wise! that they would hearken to the "Wonderful Counselor! " O that they were loyal! that they were at peace with the Prince of Peace! Then would the nations quickly know the fairness of His government and the beneficence of His administration. The world would soon be beautiful, fragrant, fruitful, pleasant as the garden of the Lord; safe and desirable as primitive Eden. How ready the great King to bless all lands were the conditions right! With Him there is no respect of persons or nations; neither is there any limit to the goodness of His heart or the gifts of His love. "In that day the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance." ‡

The Lord Jesus, in whom all power resides, has ordained civil government on a very high plane; the benefits accruing to the loyal are above all estimation. His ideal is above man's as far as the sky is above the fields. § How admirable the Lord's plan for the nations! How practical, how impartial,

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† Jer. 2:31. ‡ Isa. 19:25. § Isa. 55:9.

how beneficent His method! He makes it possible for all the powers to enter into peace, righteousness and abounding prosperity. "The God of the whole earth shall He be called." ¶

But in what way can the nations reach the highest attainments, the climax of blessedness? By what means? How can they arise out of the present conditions of darkness? Their distraction borders on despair; how can they become tranquil, hopeful, successful? This is the problem that out-wits the wisest. The restoration of the world baffles the wisdom of her statesmen; the greatest find the task insuperable. They meet, consult, experiment and—fail. They may secure temporary relief, but no permanent cure. "They have healed the hurt of My people slightly, saying Peace, peace, when there is no peace."*

How can the world reach normalcy? How can it attain to true, solid and permanent prosperity? By one expedient alone. Jesus must be accepted by the nations as the Universal Ruler and Almighty Saviour. Without Him they can have no sure hope; all other hope is like the light we call *ignis fatuus*. Jesus is the way for the political world, no less than

¶ Isa. 54:5. * Jer. 6:14.

for the individual. † Jesus, being officially related to every country by a special act of the Father, has pledged the ministry of His providence for their support, protection, progress and highest felicity, if they be obedient. ‡ By loyalty to the reign of Jesus they will quickly reach normal conditions; the earth will be renewed; Paradise will be restored; the world will be safe and happy. § But alas, what a chasm lies between the possible blessedness and the present wretchedness!

By a world-wide insurrection against Jesus, and a horrible outburst of passion and violence among men, the Supreme Government seems to be well nigh wrecked. The World Union has been shattered into fragments; the pieces are clashing and crashing against each other, till our globe presents the direst spectacle of conflict, carnage and destruction. "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are out of course." ¶

Such is the present condition of the world which the Father gave to the Son, that by Him it might be pacified and restored. These are the nations that Jesus has been attempting for long centuries to

† John 14:6. ‡ Isa. 1:19. § Hosea 2:23. ¶ Psa. 82:5.

reduce and harmonize. Has His work been a failure? Has He been out-generaled by the enemy? Has He been all this time on the defensive? Has He been losing ground and retreating under fire? By no means.

The Lord Jesus has never swerved from His fixed purpose; at no time has He found it necessary to revise His plan of action. The original chart of operations has been followed in the spirit and to the letter in every detail. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." *

Jesus is never taken by surprise; He keeps the end always in view; He presses steadily toward His objective; He will reach the goal at the set time. Rivalry in His sight is but mockery. "I am God," He exclaims, "and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from the ancient times the things that are not yet done; My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." †

David, "the sweet Psalmist of Israel," gives a graphic account of the situation. He had a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ seated on His throne in heaven. In power and dignity He is without a rival. From His exalted seat He watches the insane

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* Heb. 13:8. † Isa. 46:9.

agitation of the nations and their hostile operations. The powers are raging; the people are plotting; the kings are united in antagonism; the rulers are combined against the Lord and His annointed Son. They are saying, "Let us cut loose from them." ‡

Jesus looks and laughs. The sight is ridiculous enough to make the Eternal God laugh. But that laugh is an expression of cold derision. Withering irony meets their demonstrations of resistance and hatred. What cutting rebuke in God's laugh of contempt! Who can endure the Lord's scorn? How it blights life! See the builders of Babel. How it shrivels a nation! Think of Babylon. How it paralyzes opposition! Consider the Assyrian army in front of Jerusalem. Man's most desperate designs, his most powerful efforts, are more than matched by a word, a look, a gesture from the throne of heaven. A glance from the Lord destroyed the hosts of the Egyptians. § But the nations have not yet learned this lesson.

When the Divine countenance changes color, a storm of wrath may be expected. If the Lord be weary with long-suffering, lo, that day the offenders perish. One flash from the omniscient eye is suffi-

‡ Psa. 2:2. § Exo. 14:24

cient to overwhelm the powers that oppose Jesus; yea, the mightiest combination of powers that can be arrayed against Him. A word from the invisible lips may precipitate an avalanche of destruction, that will show the nations how impotent are their most strenuous efforts in fighting against God. "All the nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted by Him less than nothing and vanity." ¶

How vain the plots and plans of the powers when Jesus is disregarded and His wisdom set at naught! How insane their worst endeavors against Him and His kingdom! How foolish their attempt at self-determination, and their hopes for success, when Jesus is left out of their administration. The elimination of Jesus from civil government ends in disappointment and confusion; official imbecility and national distraction are sure to follow. "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the nations to naught; He maketh the devices of the people of no effect." *

When Jesus accepted power from the Father, He was inaugurated into office and honored with the gift of universal authority. † From thence He immediately issued a proclamation of amnesty to the guilty world that had shed His blood. He com-

¶ Isa. 40:17. * Psa. 33:10. † Eph. 1:20.

missioned His ambassadors to enter every country and herald the Gospel of pardon and glad tidings to all people. To His messengers He said, "Go ye therefore and disciple all nations." ‡

Promptly and with unfaltering courage they went forth, crying "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, in order that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." §

The proclamation was broadcasted, according to the ancient method. "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come."¶ And they who heard gladly extended the invitation to others. Great was the company of them who published the terms of mercy. Whosoever was willing had the privilege of pardon and salvation. The nations, as well as individuals, were included in the gracious offer, according to their nature, capacity and the place they fill in the Lord's purpose. "If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto them." †

The terms of the King were easy. Two concessions were required; submission to His authority and conformity to His will. The two requirements

‡ Matt. 28:18. § Acts 3:19. ¶ Rev. 22:17. † Jer. 18:8.

merge. Loyalty to the Central Power is the King's ultimatum. Jesus, the Sovereign of heaven and earth, commands allegiance to His throne. Any thing short of obedience, where the Gospel has been proclaimed, is treason against the Most High; it will meet with drastic treatment. "If ye shall despise My statutes, I will break the pride of your power, and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass; and your strength shall be spent in vain." ‡

The terms of the Lord have not proved acceptable to the nations. Nineteen centuries have passed and the political world is almost solid against acknowledging their King. Instead of being accredited, He is discredited. All these centuries He has pleaded with the nations, that they submit to His claims and enter into His favor. His appeals have been powerful, also pathetic. Yet with indifference that may be contemptible in the eyes of the Lord, the appeals have been persistently disregarded. The voice of His Gospel has been heard in all lands, but to this day no nation is wise enough to seek after God. The meaning of Divine goodness and longsuffering is not understood; the powers are not

‡ Lev. 26:15.

led to repentance; they will not endorse the kingship of Jesus; that is far from their thoughts.

Often times Jesus has emphasized His entreaties with discipline; with great severity He has inflicted chastisements. He has smitten the self-determined peoples that attempted self-government independent of God. He has stricken them with famine, floods, pestilence, earthquakes, revolutions and desolating wars; all to awaken the public conscience and save the erring nations. "Yet the people turneth not unto Him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts." §

When conditions grow desperate, desperate means are employed. When every remedy fails, the nations perish in their wilfulness and shame. Alas, how many have perished! The earth is littered with their ruins. From their desolate mounds a sepulchral voice may be heard, saying, "The nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." ¶

The Lord is very merciful and gracious to the nations, that by love He may win them from delusion and save them from destruction. He lavishes upon them the bounties of His goodness, that they

§ Isa. 9:13. ¶ Isa. 60:12.

may repent and reap the rich harvests of obedience. His kindness never ceases, His beneficence is never withheld until patience is exhausted. Yet among them all there is none ready to say, "The Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our law-giver; the Lord is our King; He will save us." *

Wherefore are the nations so uniform and resolute in excluding Jesus from civil government? Why do they cling so tenaciously to the independence that is independent of Almighty God? What pleasure or profit have they in the delusion of secular statesmanship? Why do they reduce civil government to a monstrosity by eliminating its Divine Head? Why do they attempt to rule, oblivious of the Most High who will hold them strictly to account? "Put them in fear, O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men." †

The experience of Nebuchadnezzar, a celebrated king of ancient Babylon, affords a solution to these perplexing problems. This king would brook no authority above himself. Gazing at the immensity and grandeur of his capital city, he became elated and exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the

* Isa. 33:22. † Psa. 9:20.

might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" ‡ Such over-weening pride can be explained only psychologically. The king was suffering from a species of insanity; his mind was unbalanced; a dense delusion had fallen upon his soul; he had lost his bearings and was wandering.

After a time he lifted up his eyes unto heaven and recognized the throne of the Lord of glory. This brought him to his senses. He then became rational, a man of sound mind, a competent and acceptable ruler. He then made his confession and left it on record for the benefit of future generations. He said, "I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored Him that liveth for ever and ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" §

When the men, who are in power lift up their eyes toward God, and see Jesus on the throne, they will have a confession to make. When will they entertain

‡ Dan. 4:30. § Dan. 4:34.

Jesus in their thoughts, honor Him in their public service, and give Him glory as the world's peerless Ruler? Then, and not till then, will they be qualified as dependable statesmen; then, and not before then, will their administration be a benediction to the nations. When the authority of Jesus becomes generally known and publicly honored this will be a glad world. "When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice." ¶

When officials behold the King in His beauty, and bow to His will, hope will arise in the human breast and proclaim the dawn of a new day. Every righteous cause will then spring forward with abounding energy and high enthusiasm; optimism will banish despondency; sorrow and sighing will flee away. Mis-rule, with its long list of failures and cruelties, will give place to wise government, administered by such as are true to God and right with men; the officials will be morally and judicially competent. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." *

¶ Prov. 29:2. * Dan. 7:27.

Some of the prophets in olden times got glimpses of the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ and were transported with the vision. They also beheld the conditions of blessedness yet awaiting our world. In anticipation they lifted up their souls in songs of praise. Some of their rhapsodies are still extant, every sentence of which is vibrant with sublimest emotion. We note a few brief selections:

"Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is King of all the earth; sing praises with understanding." †

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and give honor to Him." ‡

"And there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever." §

"And he hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." ¶

The nations in general own relationship to some

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‡ Rev. 19:6. §Rev. 11:15. ¶ Rev. 19:16. † Psa. 47:6.

supreme being. Gospel lands recognize Almighty God. America gives expression to her faith on her coin, bearing the inscription, "In God we trust." The oath of office frequently ends with the prayer, "So help me God." Thanksgiving proclamations call upon the people to praise Almighty God. The eternal God is not forgotten. But in the administration of government, Jesus Christ, His Son, is unmentioned; the Light of the world, the Ruler of the nations, the Saviour of men is, by lack of official action, consigned to political oblivion.

God the Father has appointed His Son as Mediator to conduct all providence and guide all affairs on earth. The Father is behind the Son, giving authority and approval; but the Son is the revealer of the Father's favor and the dispenser of His blessings. Only through Jesus can Almighty God be known correctly, honored properly and worshipped acceptably. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son: that all should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him." * Thus it is evident that God Almighty sustains no cordial relationship

* John 5:22.

with the nations that disrespect His Son, whose name, in honor and authority, is above every name in heaven and on earth. †

The nations, by discrediting the authority of Jesus, commit a suicidal mistake. Because of this error mighty empires have met with utter destruction. The dirge of death still lingers on the winds that sweep over their ruins. Will not the powers that have survived take warning? Persistence in the same course will surely bring the same doom.

Will the nations never learn the solemn lesson? Have they no wisdom to escape a fate no less horrible than that of the ancients? yea, more frightful, because of the greater light, that aggravates the wickedness and increases the guilt. Utter destruction is determined of the Lord against all irreconcilable powers. "The Lord is King for ever and ever; the nations are perished out of His land." ‡

The prophecy of annihilation is so certain of fulfilment that it is pronounced as a fact accomplished. "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tare you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." §

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† Phil. 2:9. ‡ Psa. 10:16. § Psa. 50:22.

V

REJECTING JESUS HANDICAPS THE WORLD

> Christ can redeem the world alone, but it cannot become a redeemed world without the help of His servants. He needs us to carry into all humanity the energies that He brought into the midst of mankind by His incarnation and sacrifice.
>
> —Alexander McClaren, D. D.

The goal of the world, under the reign of Jesus, is righteousness that includes harmony and happiness, prosperity and progress, stability and strength, peace and safety. The administration of the Lord is heading in that direction.

Notwithstanding seeming failure, the operations of Jesus are always successful; eventually He will reach His grand objective. Though the trend of public affairs at present is toward dark clouds, beyond the clouds the sun is shining; the world will yet bask in the pleasant light of perfect peace.

The mark which God has set for the world to

reach is nothing less than the highest perfection attainable; the best moral condition and physical excellence within reach and reason. Nothing short of this can satisfy the gracious heart of God and the immortal spirit of man. Jesus has said, "Be ye perfect." * This command, though short and terse, is sufficiently comprehensive to include man in every relation; nations are not excepted.

Absolute perfection in our atmosphere is by no means possible; yet relative perfection of a high order is obligatory. The highest ideals should be in the heart; the people should be on life's race course for the best things; every eye should be on the shining goal. Lack of effort is a burning shame; unbelief is cowardice; obstruction is a crime. Under the leadership of Jesus Christ, earnest action will succeed. † The earth can be renovated; mankind can be juvenated; wrong conditions can be minimized almost to elimination. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." ‡

The attainments for which the world is exhorted to strive are exceeding great; yea, absolutely price-

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* Matt. 5:48. † Hos. 6:3. ‡ Isa. 11:9.

less. They embrace righteousness, peace, security, religion, education, health and wealth; even all that enters into true national prosperity. The possibilities include everything that will make our globe a suitable place for the abode of upright men, virtuous women and innocent children. This world must yet become the delightful habitation of God, where He will dwell with His people, supplying all with His abundant goodness and protecting all from every evil. Every land will resound with His praise. Here is an exhortation which has the strength of a prediction: "Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands; sing forth the honor of His name; make His praise glorious." §

The Bible gives us numerous hints and glints of the delectable conditions awaiting the world when the goal is reached. There will be safety, "They shall not hurt nor destroy;"¶ peace, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation;" * righteousness, "Thy righteousness shall be as the waves of the sea;" † intelligence, "All they children shall be taught of the Lord;" ‡‡ thriftiness, "Our garners shall be filled, affording all manner of store;" §§ longevity, "A child shall die a hundred years old;"¶¶

§ Psa. 66:1. ¶ Isa. 11:19. * Isa. 2:4. † Isa. 48:18. ‡‡ Isa. 54:13. §§ Psa. 144:13. ¶¶ Isa. 65:20.

consecration, "Upon the bells of the horses shall be written, HOLINESS TO THE LORD."**

Many are the encouragements in the Word of God, that beckon our sick-hearted world to press onward and upward. O earth, lift up thy head and take heart! Open thine eyes and behold thy coming glory! Be strong and run the race that is set before thee, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of thy faith. The prize is great.

The world, however, is despairingly handicapped; the race is hopeless; the prize will not be won unless conditions be changed. The rejection of Jesus, the Central Power, leaves the nations sadly dissociated and society badly disintegrated. Harmony is lost amid disorder and hatred, rivalry and jealousy; strength is wasted in secret antagonism and open conflict. Without concord in principle and harmony in action, the power that could win peace is dissipated. Strength for success is not available. Under present conditions hope fails; the race is lost before it starts.

How great the handicap! How discouraging the outlook! Pause a moment and consider! Millions of young men, strong, brilliant, enthusiastic; the

** Zech. 14:20.

joy of the home, the brain of the professions, the brawn of the industries, the hope of the church, the flower of the nation, the glory of society; millions of them requisitioned and militarized; and later, wasted on battlefields or retired on pensions,—what a handicap! Their chief training is for manslaughter; their profession, the shedding of blood. This mighty force drawn from the peaceful industries and useful professions, to be employed in work that retards the world and reverses civilization; how can the race be won?

Also while millions of young lives are withdrawn from earth's noble pursuits, billions of material wealth are diverted from the world's utilities to enact wholesale barbarities. Money by the thousands of millions is applied to the maintenance of armies, navies and air-fleets; used in inventing and preparing instruments of death and means of destruction on a scale too extensive and diabolical to be mentioned. Preparation is reported even now in progress for another debacle, which, if it occur, will again drench vast areas with blood and countless cheeks with tears.

How can the world attain to the true standard of moral and physical excellence while held in check

with such a handicap! Surely some power, not innate in man, not found in secular government, is needed to shake off the incubus. Conditions must be radically changed, or the goal will never be reached. Rulers administering government have never proved competent; the nations have never been at their best; they have ever been confronted by dangers that threaten the worst. Shall not Jesus be permitted to lead the world's forces? Otherwise will not their demoralization continue? yea, increase and work direful havoc?

The world can attain to righteousness and peace only by a master mind; and that must be the Master's Mind. None other is able to guide the nations to the tranquil haven. The most competent mind on earth is puerile in presence of such a task. Even a super-nation, if there be such, is utterly insufficient to take the leadership without Jesus, "who has been given for a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander to the peoples." * Yea, a league of nations is not capable; no power in a league to elevate the world in morals and establish peace on a permanent basis without invoking the help of the Lord Jesus Christ. Ambition and mistrust lurk in

* Isa. 55:4.

the human heart like dynamite; an explosion in the league is morally certain if it continue to function without God in Jesus Christ. "Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of hosts." †

Jesus is needed at the head of the nations. Without Him at the head of national affairs, recognized and honored in His kingship, the worst will eventually happen; friction, disruption, collisions, desolations, political perdition. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." The powers without Jesus as their leader have a dark outlook. Their wilful rejection of Him as their Ruler is a suicidal mistake. "Away with Him," ‡ cried the people of Judah. The Lord graciously permitted the next generation to come forward, that they might reverse the action of their fathers. But they gave it their approval. From that time they ceased to be a nation. They handicapped themselves and lost the race.

But has not Jesus already taken His place at the front? Is not the leadership even now in His hand by the decree of the Father? Has not universal

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† Jer. 2:19. ‡ John 19:15.

government been centralized in Him? Does not His authority over the nations extend to their remotest bounds? Does not responsibility for results rest ultimately with Him? Has He not said: "All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth." §

True: but the nations have not accepted the leadership of Jesus their King. They will not deign to yield submission to His reign. Rather will they struggle on, weakened and disabled by the horrible handicap. Rather will they lose the race and all that it involves, than rally under the banner of Jesus and win the prize and all that it includes. The animus of the world is against the Omnipotent Ruler. This animus produces the handicap.

But why does not Jesus in His omnipotence use compulsion? Why not force the nations into line and make them speed up? Why not coerce them that they may achieve success? Would not such a course be proof of successful leadership? Would it not be to their interest and likewise to His credit? Are not all things possible with Almighty God? These queries seem to carry their own answers; the affirmative seems to be the inevitable conclusion.

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§ Matt. 28:18.

Yet the Lord can never do that which would tarnish His moral perfections, nor reverse the laws that govern His own life. "I am the Lord, I change not." ¶

At this point we may discover one thing that the Lord will never do, if we judge from His uniform course of procedure. He will not destroy the freedom of will in man or nation. Such an act might be both a violence to the creature and a violation of sovereign power. Liberty of choice and action is an essential factor in every responsible being. Without it man would not be man, but a machine or a beast; nor would a nation be a nation, but a system of machinery or of beastly power.

Nations are moral persons; therefore are they responsible: the Lord deals with them as such. They are endowed with intellect, conscience and volition. They have mind and can formulate laws; conscience and can decide moral questions; volition and can administer government, adopting a basis and a policy of their own choice. They have the personal qualities that render them responsible to the Most High; they must reckon with God; must account even for the handicap.

¶ Mal. 3:6.

Jesus is deeply interested in the nations; He ever works for their highest welfare. He never fails to do them the utmost good within the bounds of reason. He instructs, counsels, admonishes, chastises and punishes; all this to their advantage, while there is hope. When they persist in wickedness till all remedies fail, then He destroys them. But while they have being, He never despoils them of free will; this badge of responsibility goes with them to the grave. The handicap destroys alertness but not volition.

If the nations reach not the goal of noblest and happiest well-being, their own perversity is the cause. They will not avail themselves of the Lord's leadership and help. They cling to their fateful handicap for the poor luxuries it affords. They will not recognize the authority of Jesus as the Supreme Ruler. They will not honor Him as the Central Power, without which the rulers are powerless to secure peace for this distracted world. By their own deliberate choice, or by wilful neglect perhaps through obliviousness, they reach the anti-climax of greatness even while the climax is possible. Their destiny hinges on their acceptance or

rejection of Jesus, an act of their own free will. *

Many international conferences have been held in recent years. In none of them, however, has the authority of King Jesus been mentioned. There is no evidence that the sovereignty of the Lord has ever been considered in the assemblies where great men meet to discuss the world's supreme interests. Neither unitedly nor separately do the powers show any concern for the Lord's kingship. Their paramount questions relate to armies and navies, debts and leagues, boundaries and protection. The relation of nations to the God of nations has not been broached. The men in authority are in accord, saying by attitude, if not by voice and vote, "We will not have this man to reign over us." † They hug the handicap.

The rejection of Jesus as King of the world prevents the nations from being at their best, and clears the way for the approach of the worst. The results of such treatment of the great Lord of glory are too appalling to enumerate or contemplate. The reactionary effects are horrible in the extreme. The powers have thereby become alienated, separated, belligerent, and even malignant and diabolical in

* Josh. 24:15. † Luke 19:14.

their attempt to destroy one another. The world has become a cemetery of nations that have perished in their own blood; nations that became victims of the handicap.

Thus this ignoble treatment of the Royal Son of God involves ruinous losses. The damages sustained are beyond estimation. The injuries incurred and the favors forfeited are inconceivable. Future generations will be amazed at the havoc wrought through the folly and blindness of their antecedents attempting to run the government without the help of Jesus. When will the rulers take this to heart? When will they lay aside the weight that holds them back from success? When will they put away the sin by which they are sure to lose the race and involve the nations in ruin and disgrace? When will they cast off the cruel handicap and bring the nations to Jesus amid acclamations of honor and victory?

Disregard for Jesus in the political world is the cause of such appalling disasters, that even the heart of God seems to be burdened at the sight and sickened with regrets. Over a self-willed nation, prostrate in her ruins, He exclaims, "O that thou hadst harkened to My commandments? Then had

thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea." ‡

The Lord Jesus, who alone can understand the tragedy of a nation's downfall, could express His feelings, in the presence of such a catastrophe, only by a loud exclamation of grief and with flowing tears. When Jesus beheld the city of Jerusalem rushing into destruction, and the whole nation heading wrecklessly toward ruin, He wept, crying out, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." § The blessings forfeited and the sufferings involved could find expression only in sighs and lamentations arising from the greatest heart that ever sympathized with our world or sorrowed over the desolation of nations.

The nations that refuse Jesus, the Prince and Saviour, are blind; they cannot see the future. Trusting in their own might and wisdom, they are facing fearful consequences. They, that reject Divine counsel and pursue their own course, are actively engaged in self-destruction; they are sowing the seed that will yield a harvest of death.

Their fairest prospects will vanish in the dark-

‡ Isa. 48:18. § Luke 19:42.

ness of night; and that night will be without a star, and without a morning. ¶ And, lo, in their deepest sorrow, an accusing voice will never cease to say, "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God." * Desolation and dissolution await the powers that decline the authority of Jesus. Without repentance and new conditions they cannot survive the avenging wrath of God. Long may He wait to be gracious; but even Divine patience has an end.

¶ Zeph. 1:14. * Jer. 2:17.

VI

REJECTING JESUS TENDS TOWARD CHAOTIC CONDITIONS

> A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.*—The Prophet Isaiah.

The rejection of Jesus, the Prince and Saviour of nations, reacts with terrific force and frightful effect. Sin carries in its own bosom the law of vengeance; and the greater the sin, the more drastic the vengeance. O that the nations were wise and would take consequences into account!

What sin so enormous, what insolence so aggravating, as the attempt to set Jesus aside and rule in His stead! What so sure to kindle the King's wrath as the arrogance that ignores His existence and

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* Isa. 1:4.

assumes His place and claims His rights! Such defiance, such contemptible daring, will surely yield a harvest of its own kind. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap;† likewise a nation.

Such provocation is too presumptuous to be prolonged with safety. It may kindle a fire that will not be quenched but with the blood of the offenders. When Israel determined to dispense with the Lord's authority and trample on His rights, He gave them warning, saying, "I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be! for a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains." ‡ The Lord has not changed His mind or His methods in dealing with such cases.

Thus saith Jesus, the world's Mighty Ruler, "I am the Lord; that is My name; and I will not give My glory to another." § Nebuchadnezzar, king of ancient Babylon, in that age the autocrat of the world, thought to out-class God in prominence and majesty. For his pride and presumption God promptly reduced him to the status and fellowship of the oxen that were grazing in his fields. ¶ Was

† Gal. 6:7. ‡ Deut. 32:22. § Isa. 42:8. ¶ Dan. 5:21.

it not the same ambition and haughtiness that hurled our civilization into the vortex of the great world war, in which the nations raved like madmen? And they are not yet cured of their insanity.

Jesus, viewing the wickedness of the nations that reject Him, and the re-actionary effects, pleads with infinite tenderness, saying, "Turn you at My reproof: behold I will pour out My spirit unto you: I will make known My words unto you." *

Deploring the suicidal course of the powers He had counseled and protected, the Lord breaks forth into pathetic lamentations, as if talking with Himself. It seems like a soliloquy when He says, "They would none of My counsel: they despised all My reproof: therefore they shall eat of the fruit of their own ways, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the indifference of fools shall destroy them." †

Consider how far the world today is from normalcy, if you would know how much it costs the nations to discard Christ's authority and pursue their own policies. Consider how vast the chasm between what the world is, under man's administration; and what it would be, under the Lord's

* Prov. 1:23. † Prov. 1:30.

Golden Rule, if you would know what an evil and bitter thing it is to forsake the living and true God. Consider the jealousies, agitations, aggrievances, hostilities and desolations among the nations, if you would discover man's utter inability, yea, his imbecility, as he attempts the task of stabilizing the powers and restoring peace without Jesus. Consider the drift of the world toward another war, a war of unprecedented horrors, if present indications be reliable, and see if our woe-beleagued world can ever have permanent and universal peace without the help of God through Jesus Christ.

The world has need of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, as the political leader; without the King of nations in the statehouse, the state is on the way to chaotic conditions.

The world is still military in spirit; the nations are yet pugnacious. Militarism will not consent to be civilized; nor when prepared for action will it brook much delay. It is imperial in power and imperious at heart, determined to bear sway and have its own way. Modification will not hold it in check; absolute prohibition must be enforced. The world cannot forever display two irreconcilable flags, the white and the red. The time is coming when the one shall be unfurled everywhere and the

other found nowhere. Nor is there any doubt which will win; the white at last shall hold the field; the right shall have the victory. But while the nations hesitate and altercate with Jesus their King, they are on the way to defeat and chaos.

Jesus is among the nations, like the sun among the planets, the center and source of life, light, power and action. ‡ If a planet break its relation with the sun, if it snap its centripetal bond of union, it becomes a wandering star, doomed to isolation, frigidity, desolation, darkness and death. It must return to its orbit or perish. Thus with the nations. To suspend relation with Jesus, the Central Power, involves consequences most serious. The initial action forebodes disaster. Such a course leads away from the source of life, safety, energy and wise activity. It is the short route to helplessness and hopelessness; the end is perdition. "Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire; and no man shall spare his brother." §

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of the nations and Saviour of the world, occupies officially and influentially the center of the wide-rimmed uni-

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‡ Mal. 4:2. § Isa. 9:19.

verse; His power and sovereignty extend to the borders of creation. The apostle Paul was honored with a vision of the extensiveness of Christ's dominion. He labored for language to express what He saw. We quote a passage from his pen: "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or principalities or powers; all things were created by Him and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." ¶

The last clause of this quotation is rendered in the Revised Version, "All things hold together." * In Jesus the universe constitutes one vast system, united, sustained, harmonized and made productive by His almighty power. Without Him as the Central Magnate, creation would fall into chaotic conditions, perhaps disappear in its original nothingness; the present concord prevailing among the spheres would give place to wildest confusion.

The nations however have suspended, or at least refused to admit their relation to Jesus as their Moral Governor; hence their wretched state of disorder almost bordering on despair. Having snapped the bond that held them in the orbit of duty and

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¶ Col. 1:16. * Col. 1:17.

safety, they dash against each other in ruinous confusion. Instead of circling gracefully, peacefully, joyfully, loyally around the Sun of righteousness, † they have chosen their own course and their clashing never ceases. They diverge and converge without compass or guide. They revel in conflict and collision. One after another they perish in their own blood. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." ‡

With no controlling force stronger than international law, and that as weak as "a scrap of paper," the nations have become wandering stars. Their erratic movements often pass beyond the line of safety; frequently they cross each other's path. When this occurs, lo, a crash, a horror, a war.

Human prudence is not sufficient to prevent war; jurisprudence thus far has failed to keep the peace. The political bodies clash and are shattered. Nor can the shock of battle cease, or the horrors of war yield to the pleadings of peace, till the nations assemble around Jesus as the Center of the Uni-

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† Mal. 4:2. ‡ Psa. 2:2.

verse, and honor Him as the Sovereign of creation. He is the Sun; they are the planets.

Departure from the right course causes collisions; collisions occasion wars; war revels in destruction; destruction glories in chaos. The infernal progress can be checked and reversed only by a master mind in control; and that must be the Master's Mind. §

Without Jesus at the head of the nations, war is a moral certainty; yea, the overthrow of government in the course of time is beyond peradventure. Behold the heaps that mark the graves of nations! They flourished in God's beneficent providence; they perished through an inflated sense of power and haughty independence of the Lord. "And the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." ¶

The only preventative of national decay and dissolution, not yet tested, is the recognition of the Lord Jesus and loyal submission to His will. The world is sick almost unto death. Statesmen have tried every other remedy within their knowledge. Yet their patient is not getting better; rather growing worse.

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§ Isa. 48:17. ¶ Isa. 2:11.

O wherefore will they not give the Divine prescription a fair trial; without it the nations will surely die. Without it war cannot be abolished; chaotic conditions cannot be prevented. A celebrated American general, being reminded that he was not conducting his campaign according to the rules of civilized war, retorted, "War is not civilized; war is hell." While the devil is loose, he will do his best and worst to consolidate our world with his own region. While he is at liberty and in power, how can the nations be at peace? War is inevitable.

The nations are heading toward political chaos; they must face about or become the sport of demons. Perhaps they are that just now. They are sealing their own doom by neglecting the remedy God has prescribed and provided. The continued rejection of Jesus prognosticates extinction. "For the kingdom and nation that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." *

Israel affords an apt illustration of this alarming truth. That nation was greatly favored of the Lord above other nations in their day. He gave them laws and institutions suited to their times and con-

* Isa. 60:12.

ditions, thus fitting them for their mission in the world. Their civic constitution was the Decalogue; their primitive legislation was merely an expansion of their constitution. None were eligible to office except those who feared God and loved righteousness. †

While the Lord was duly honored and the government faithfully administered, the nation flourished. When the true standard of national life was forsaken and God forgotten, Israel retrograded. Fidelity to the Lord marked success and happiness at high tide; departure from the Lord brought low tide. They rose and fell according to the degree of their loyalty to the Lord.

While Israel kept faith with God and moved in the orbit of righteousness, the nation was immune to injury and defeat. War was often met on the way, but the enemy was easily brushed aside. All attacks were like the waves breaking against the rocks. Israel was unharmed by the mightiest foes. And this should have been, and could have been, and would have been, through all coming time, had the nation remained true to God. "The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto

† Exo. 18:21.

Him; but their time should have endured for ever."‡

But Israel was not steadfast. The nation often relaxed; violated her constitution; interlarded her laws with vain devices; adopted worldly policies of government. Finally she disowned her Lord and repudiated all obligations to Him. With bitter hatred the people shrieked, "Away with Him; we have no king but Ceasar." § They renounced the authority of Jesus the Son of God and endorsed the sovereignty of a mere man instead. Henceforth that nation, having cut loose from the Central Sun, became a wandering star, moving helplessly among hostile powers, harassed and embarrassed in every part of the habitable world.

Israel had a checkered career from the first revolt against the Lord till the fateful day of His rejection. Rebellion and repentance alternated. They sinned and they suffered; they cried to God and were delivered. Now the people are strong and triumphant; again they are diminished and humiliated. Their treason against the Most High often brought them as a nation to the verge of annihilation. In war they frequently suffered defeat and loss of independence. Swerving from the path of

‡ Psa. 81:15. § John 19:15.

rectitude, they were swayed back by the sword that drenched their fields with their own blood. The remedy was severe because nothing else was effective. "He gave His people also unto the sword, and was wroth with His inheritance." ¶

The corrective wars increased in violence as the offences against the Lord were repeated. Their case became desperate when their bearing toward God became daring and defiant. The country was foraged; the cities were pillaged; the armies were slaughtered; the people were deported; independence was lost; the nation was reduced to vassalage. And yet however frequent their revolts against the Lord, or frightful the distress of the people, the cry of grief quickly won the heart of God and brought deliverance. "Yea, many a time turned He His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath." * Yet war, like medicine, in the process of time may lose its remedial effects. God's warnings may not be taken seriously till they become judgments and terminate in execution. Then it is too late. Onward the nation plunged. Irrevocable ruin became inevitable. The gulf of destruction yawned for the approaching victim; the nation drifted beyond hope.

¶ Psa. 78:62. * Psa. 78:38.

The Lord can be provoked to let the transgressor pass the dead line and commit the unpardonable sin. At this point He declares with awful deliberation and determination, "Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet My mind could not be toward this people; cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth." †

Forty years after the infamous rejection of Jesus, ‡ Jerusalem was surrounded by a powerful Roman army. The merciful Lord still hesitated to inflict the death penalty; waited a full generation. Will the children disown, or will they endorse the deed of their fathers? The life of the nation depends on their decision. It received their endorsement; then their doom was sealed. The city suffered a protracted siege. The defenders were weakened by factional strife; law and discipline were swept away by jealousy and unbridled passion. Treachery, anarchy and despair prevailed. The slaughter was incredible; more than a million lives were sacrificed. The holocaust indicated the magnitude of the guilt. Pandemonium reigned. The city was reduced to ruinous heaps; desolation brooded over the land; the war ended in chaos. The rejection of

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† Jer. 15:1. ‡ John 19:15.

Jesus, the King and Saviour of nations, when persisted in to the bitter end, can terminate only in political perdition. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." §

Without the help of Jesus, earth's merciful Sovereign, the nations will continue to be the victims of war. Deliverance can come from no other source. But how can they expect help while they are disloyal? There can be no peace till the nations get right with God. This is the preliminary step.

At the present moment, no permanent peace is in sight. The powers are heading toward worse conditions. The blind are leading the blind; the ditch that awaits their coming is wide and deep. The Lord Jesus, and none but He, is able to prevent the fatal plunge.

Wherefore are the world's rulers so obstinate in pursuing their insane and ruinous policy? Do they not hear the appealing voice, saying, "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no Saviour."

Salvation cometh from the Lord alone. Jesus, and none but He, can cast out the war demon. He,

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§ Isa. 57:20.

and none other, can restore sanity and tranquility to the afflicted powers. He, and He only, can pacify the world and bring good will and happiness to all people. When will the nations apply to Jesus for relief? When will they accept His leadership, that they may escape the doom of the lost? Is it not high time that they listen to His earnest and pathetic voice, saying, "Follow Me!"

VII

THE LORD'S CONTROVERSY WITH THE NATIONS

> The flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt and other great catastrophes happened because men were stubborn or men were foul.
>
> —George A. Smith, M. A.

When Pilate sat in judgment on the case of Jesus, he was awed with the innate majesty and stainless innocence of his Prisoner. Once and again he sought to release Him. The accusers were inexorable. Perplexed beyond measure the judge exclaimed, "What shall I then do with Jesus?" * He might well have added, "And what will Jesus do with me?"

The nations are not sufficiently interested in Jesus to consider any action whatever in His case. Their indifference is mysterious and lamentable. Their omission speaks louder than words, saying "What have we to do with Thee, Thou Son of God."† All

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* Matt. 27:22. † Matt. 8:29.

relationship to Jesus, the world's Ruler, is discountenanced, if not actually renounced.

When Jesus meets the challenge, what will He do with the nations? Their treatment of Him anticipates, yea, rather necessitates, a consequential treatment of them. He is their King, though they regard not His authority. He is "the Governor among the nations," ‡ though they accord Him neither part nor place in the administration of government. How unwise and offensive toward Him their attitude and conduct! What will Jesus do in return? The law of compensation never fails; an equivalent will surely be awarded. "The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to His ways; according to his doings will He recompense him." §

The Judge of all the earth will do right. The Lord is meek, slow to anger, waits to be gracious, delights in mercy, loves to show favor. Yet let the nations beware of mistaking His delay for indifference. Inaction with the Lord is no sign of unconcern or inability. His great heart cherishes kindliest motives. He gives the nations time to consider, to decide, to take action and escape. If they be

‡ Psa. 22:28. § Hosea 12:2.

saved, it will be of their own choice; if destroyed, they must bear the blame. Jesus will not deprive them of the power of volition, even though they choose to wander and perish. "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve." ¶

Can it be possible that the Lord will always bear with the impertinence and perversity of the world powers? Scarcely possible. He has too much at stake. The ship of state, freighted with nearly two billion souls, and a new cargo every generation, is of utmost importance to Him. How great His interest in the peoples of the whole world! They are all His own. "He hath made of one blood all nations."* He lays claim to every man, woman and child. "All souls are Mine," He exclaims. †

The rulers are responsible to Jesus for the welfare of the world's vast population. Through His providence, the rulers are elevated to positions of power and trust; to Jesus, the Supreme Ruler, they must give account of themselves in the use or abuse of their authority. "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is Judge: He putteth down one and setteth up another." ‡

¶ Josh. 24:15. * Acts 17:26. † Ezek. 18:4. ‡ Psa. 75:6.

Civil government, as erected by the world's authorities, is well nigh Christless. In its foundation and administration it is universally secular; rises no higher at best than humanitarian principles, and at its worst is almost satanic. The Lord Jesus is accorded neither place nor voice in the jurisdiction of the world. And this is that same Jesus, "that hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." §

The administration of law on the secular basis has ever proved a baneful error. Secular government is a fountain that floods the world with brackish waters and bitter consequences. Jesus is thereby dishonored; the people are wronged; the rulers are confounded; the nations are blighted and imperiled; their very existence is a mere matter of time, unless they face about and change their course. Their salvation absolutely depends on their acceptance of Jesus as their Prince and Saviour. "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry

§ Rev. 19:16.

and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little." ¶

The nations, by acting independent of Jesus and persisting in self-determination, always run amuck. They never rise higher than the possibility of strikes, riots, revolts, battle-fields, catastrophes, world tragedies. They are in constant conflict with the Lord and His impregnable government of righteousness. Their troubles never cease. He counsels, pleads, remonstrates, threatens, corrects with judicial severity and painful providences. He flashes His lightnings of wrath over the perilous road they travel, saying in thunder tones, "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil way; for why will ye die?" * The Lord's voice is heard in His Word; His lightnings are seen in His providence.

If the arguments of mercy be not sufficient to win the nations, then He releases the forces of judgment. The nations may become so perverse and corrupt under immoral and incompetent rulers, that discipline will utterly fail and destruction will become a moral necessity. Remember the doom of Sodom and Gomorrah. † When God has a contro-

¶ Psa. 2:10. * Ezek. 33:11. † Gen. 19:13.

versy with a nation, it will end either in conversion or in destruction.

When Israel rejected the Lord and trusted in their own wisdom and might, He remonstrated in language they could not misunderstand; it was forceful and pointed. Disaster followed disaster. Sedition, invasion, famine, pestilence and other destructive forces swept the land and decimated the people. Their national independence was often imperiled and their country impoverished. Without the favor of God they quickly became helpless and hopeless. Their rulers made them to sin, and their sins made them to suffer. ‡ Every adversity was a new argument by which they might be reclaimed.

In their plight they prayed and they were rescued. Many times the Lord turned back the tide of distress; by His merciful intervention, peace and safety were often restored. Then the rulers could find time to count the cost of attempting to run the government aloof from God. Gazing at the devastated fields and desolated cities, they might hear a voice upbraiding them saying, "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God." § Thus were they reproved by

‡ I Kings 14:16. § Jer. 2:17.

the prophets and reproached by their own conscience. The Lord's logic was painfully emphatic: it had effect.

And yet when peace returned, they soon forgot. When prosperity came they spurned His counsel and obstinately pursued their own devices. They still preferred the down-grade, denying the Lord and defying His warnings, corrupting themselves and leaving their children a heritage of woe. Against such ingratitude and folly the Divine Sovereign renews His protest, saying, "Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord; and shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this." ¶

But what can curb a nation on the downward grade? The passions of the carnal heart are unleashed; gratification is substituted for morality; what pleases the masses becomes the standard of conduct. The delicious infatuation of the people, the tremendous momentum of a declining nation, the increasing velocity of a corrupt government, the growing laxity and incompetency of rulers,—all tend to excite and incite the public to a dangerous degree of impulsive activity. The political machine gets beyond control; a crash is inevitable; it cannot

¶ Jer. 9:9.

be prevented. The downward rush means ruin ahead.

Thus Israel, undaunted by painful corrections and crushing judgments, speeds into greater wickedness. The Lord's controversy may soon cease; His next move may be abandonment. The Lord Himself seems amazed at such insensibility and stubbornness, and exclaims, "Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they have gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more." *

And yet the Lord would not cease His controversy; from the contention He would not withdraw. May we be permitted to say with reverence, He could not. The nation having widened the breach must either repent or be reduced. The Lord sends His prophet with another warning. Pointing to the scenes of carnage and pillage, he exclaims, "For all this His anger is not turned away; but His hand is stretched out still." † The authorities are informed

* Isa. 1:4. † Isa. 9:12.

that they are in the thick of a desperate fight against Almighty God.

The outstretched hand however is scorned. The obstinate nation repents not, and the righteous Judge relents not. The battle is renewed.

The punishment of treason against God must continue till His moral government be vindicated. The strokes grow heavier and more frequent. The nation is stunned, exasperated, frenzied, approaches insanity. Yet the Lord proceeds with His awful work of redemption by judgment. Mercy had failed; judgment is on trial. If judgment fail in the work of recovery, the government of Israel will perish from the face of the earth.

Once more the Lord in His controversy steps between the nation and perdition; He gives another warning, it sounds like the knell of doom. He says, "If ye will not be reformed by Me by these things, but will walk contrary to Me; then will I also walk contrary to you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins." ‡ The last ray of hope was fast fading from their sky.

Both mercy and judgment can be exhausted as remedial forces, while the people still hold to their

‡ Lev. 26:23.

own way. When this occurs, the Lord steps aside, permitting the suicidal nation to pass on to her doom. And yet as if unable to bear the sight of such a catastrophe, or behold the horrors into which the people are rushing, He calls after them with a lamentable voice, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? My heart is turned within Me; My repentings are kindled together" §

The rulers had forsaken the Lord; they had sown the seed of self-determination. Therefore they and the people must reap the harvest of self-destruction. Self-determination and self-destruction, in effect, are synonyms, when insubordination to God is included.

How quickly the nation was on the rapids of ruinous events when the Lord withdrew His merciful restraints. Clutched by the relentless waves of disaster, the people were decimated; the government was overthrown; the survivors were scattered to the ends of the earth; Israel was reckoned no more among the nations. Their nationality ceased; nor can it be restored until they "look upon Him whom

§ Hos. 11:8.

they have pierced and mourn for their sins." ¶

The overthrow of Israel is God's warning to other governments. If they pursue the same course, they will assuredly meet the same fate. With emphasis that should make the mightiest tremble, the Lord speaks, saying to each and every one of them, "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that My fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts." *

Perhaps the Lord's controversy with the nations was never more tense than now. He is using the language of events that stun the world. He is speaking to kings and judges in wrath; He is vexing them in His sore displeasure. † The overthrow of modern nations, the destruction of empires that recently flourished in power and pride, fill thoughtful hearts with alarm. The dread catastrophes, that follow each other with astounding rapidity, awaken serious apprehension of others yet to come.

The disastrous operations of providence almost stagger our faith; our confidence in a Supreme Ruler well nigh fails. How can these things be?

¶ Zec. 12:10. * Jer. 2:19. † Psa. 2:5.

If there is a living and true God, where is He? If He be good, is He also Almighty, able to do all His pleasure? Then wherefore does He permit such direful distresses? Can He be good and take part in the destructive events that are ever occuring? If He be interested in the world, why does He permit the horrors that shock and crush mankind? How can the Omnipotent Ruler have any satisfaction in the collapse of nations, the ruin of cities, the desolation of homes and the anguish of broken hearts?

Or may it be possible that He is impotent rather than omnipotent, helpless rather than all-sufficient? Is He without power to control the forces of nature and the armies of men? The brain swims in a sea of perplexity; yea, sinks beneath the briny waters. Yet let this one principle be fixed immovably in the mind,—The Supreme Judge is altogether righteous; He can never do wrong.

A prominent ruler in Israel, surveying the desolation that had befallen his country, looked up to God, exclaiming, "Thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for Thou hast done right; but we have done wickedly." ‡

Jesus is "the light of the world." This is a day

‡ Neh. 9:33.

of Gospel light throughout the earth. The name of Jesus has been published in every land; the Gospel has been preached in all languages; the true light shines around the globe. The world has become one neighborhood; the nations are inter-related and closely associated; all are more or less favored with the good news and glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ. And according to the light so are the privileges and responsibilities. Sin against knowledge is highly aggravating; the guilt becomes enormous.

The nations have the knowledge of Jesus and are sinning against light. The sin against light approaches the unpardonable sin. § Without repentance and reformation, worse conditions will yet be reached; greater guilt will be incurred; the extreme penalty will be earned and paid; destruction alone can meet the case. "Thou hast forsaken Me, saith the Lord; thou art gone backward; therefore will I stretch out My hand against thee and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting." ¶

The Lord willingly shares in the responsibility for all destructive events; His connection with them and identity in them He never shields. By His

§ Heb. 10:26. ¶ Jer. 15:6.

judgments He overthrows nations; by His providences myriads of lives are lost; yet He never apologizes; moral necessity lays the heavy burden upon the righteous Judge. He is under obligation by the law of His own being. Otherwise His essential attributes would fail; He would cease to be righteous; cease to be God. Earth would soon become pandemonium; cosmos would quickly return to chaos. "But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Thy kingdom." * The Eternal God thus addresses His Son Jesus Christ.

When the human race, in the days of Noah, reveled in filth and violence till the world had become intolerably foul and cruel, the occasion required nothing short of a devastating deluge. And yet the Lord was longsuffering. He hesitated to execute such dreadful judgment. He gave warning and waited patiently. He held back the overflowing waters a hundred and twenty years after the announcement. But the lewdness and lawlessness, rising like a tide, would not be checked. The Lord forewarned, saying, "Behold, I, even I, do bring a

* Heb. 1:8.

flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die." † Noah, the prophet and preacher, could not fail to speak in terms of God's mercy, also in the tones of His wrath. The warning was scorned; the mercy was refused; the wrath was defied. A generation of stalwarts, strong, wicked and cruel, recklessly faced the flood and perished therein. All flesh that moved upon the earth, except one ship load, died. Yet for all this the Lord accepts responsibility. That His identity as the potential author might not be mistaken, He said with great emphasis, "Behold, I, even I, do bring a flood." †

Wickedness was the procuring cause; justice was the punitive cause; the flood was the instrumental cause; the Lord was the executive cause. Almighty God admits His part in the loss of life and property in the world-wide deluge; likewise in all destructive providences that befall mankind. He does His work with a strong hand and never winces under the fire of criticism; He scorns the critic.

Jesus revealed Himself to the apostle John on Patmos as a military officer, mounted on a white

† Gen. 6:17.

horse, ‡ dashing over the battlefield, doing fearful execution upon the enemy. The seer described the scene, saying, "And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."§

Away with the sickly, silly notion, that Jesus is too tenderhearted to punish impenitent sinners! Vengeance can be prevented only by faith in His atoning sacrifice on the cross. He is as little annoyed with the carping critics as is the sun with the chirping crickets.

The frightful retributions now falling upon the earth are of the Lord; His strongest arguments of mercy; His passionate appeals of love; all to awaken the world to a sense of approaching danger. He is pleading with the nations, that they may yield to Him and be saved. On the red fields of carnage He pleads. By fire and flood, famine, earthquake and pestilence He pleads. ¶

The milder methods seem to have been exhausted;

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‡ Rev. 19:11. § Rev. 19:16. ¶ Jer. 44:13.

He now speaks in tones that stagger the powers and make the earth tremble. He vehemently urges them to take the way of safety, saying, "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin." *

Verily the guilt of the nations must be excessive when the requital is so appalling. Judgment is the Lord's "strange work"; mercy is His "darling attribute." He delights in mercy; He hesitates at judgment. He says, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." † And yet the Lord must be sufficiently severe to justify Himself and vindicate His government. He must sustain His own Divinity and maintain His Godhood.

The rulers seem to be the chief objects of God's wrath in dealing with the nations. His controversy is with them both personally and officially. He challenges their ways when wrong; holds them responsible for results; demands that they return and bring the people back, or become a sacrifice in the attempt. When the government is out of harmony with God, when it antagonizes the will of Jesus, the rulers are the leaders in the transgression; they sin, and they make the people to sin. ‡

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* Ezek. 18:30. † Matt. 9:13. ‡ I Kings 14:16.

The mal-administration of King Pharaoh brought ten plagues upon Egypt. The country was impoverished; the firstborn was slain; the army was overwhelmed in the Red Sea. § The stubbornness of the crowned head involved the whole nation. The men in authority, who by mis-rule provoke the Lord to smite the people, must bear a ponderous load of guilt.

The ruler represents the people; the personality of the state centers in the executive. The nation, as a unit, is morally responsible before the Lord in the person of its official head. Therefore his digression from the right, and disrespect for the rights of Jesus, affect all he represents.

King Saul, by his incorrigible spirit and offensive conduct, brought defeat to the army of Israel and humiliation to the whole nation. For his disobedience to the Lord, the country lay helpless beneath the feet of the haughty conqueror. King Saul passed out of office in a tempest of God's wrath; a storm that swept the land from border to border. "So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armour-bearer, and all his men, that same day together." ¶

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§ Exo. 14:27. ¶ I Sam. 31:6.

The men in authority have power to direct the people right, and have influence to lead them wrong. When the officials do right, they procure the Divine favor for their country; when they do wrong, they bring the Lord's wrath upon the nation. The righteous ruler is a public benefactor; his services are a benediction; the blessings of heaven come down like spring showers. * The unjust ruler is a malefactor; he brings evil upon himself and all he represents; precipitates the judgments of God upon his own head and upon all under his authority. †

Jeroboam, King of Israel, furnishes an example in point. He forsook the Lord and led Israel astray; based his government on expediency and adopted a profligate policy. ‡ He gave loose rein to the baser passions of the people; the down-grade became popular; the broad road was crowded. And the Lord pronounced judgment against Jeroboam as "the man who made Israel to sin." § His reign was a vexatious disappointment; his country was often drenched with the blood of his subjects; his posterity was doomed to extinction.

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* II Sam. 23:4. † II Kings 23:26.
‡ I Kings 12:32. § I Kings 15:30.

VIII

WORLD SAFETY REQUIRES RADICAL ACTION

> A mighty revolution will sweep over the world and change the center of influence and power. The whole machinery of earth and hell and heaven are set in motion to establish a kingdom whose foundation is Christ.
>
> —Leonidas Robinson, M. A., Ph. D.

The night Jesus was born, an "heavenly host" hovered over the suburban fields of Bethlehem, celebrating the joyful event by chanting the Gospel of peace,—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." *

The apostle John, in later years, "saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His

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* Luke 2:14.

judgment is come." † In the first instance we hear the message of peace; in the second, the message of judgment.

The double reference is to the one and same Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in its opposite effects upon the people, according as it is received or refused. To some it is foolishness, and they perish; to others it is the power of God, and they are saved. ‡

How striking and alarming the change of significance in the Gospel! At first, the sweet voice of peace; at a later day, the stern language of judgment! The wind has veered from the south to the north; from the soft tones of loving kindness to the sharp accents of retribution. Something has happened. How account for the change?

Too long the good news has been despised by the nations; too long they have rejected the terms of peace; the offers have been forfeited. The day of accounts has arrived; the King has arisen to the occasion; a just requittal is now in order; "the hour of judgment is come." §

The Gospel of Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of the world, has reached all lands and has

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† Rev. 14:6. ‡ I Cor. 1:18. § Rev. 14:7.

been proclaimed in kindliest spirit. The enthronement of Jesus, King of nations, has been heralded through all the earth. The call for submission to His terms and loyalty to His government has had wide publicity. Time for acceptance, at least for consideration, has been given. But they have not acted; have not even considered action. Long, long has the Lord waited, pleaded, remonstrated, threatened, chastised; severe discipline has often been used.

In many cases, the utter destruction of entire nations became a moral necessity. Therefore capital punishment was inflicted. May not the present powers that are incorrigible and irreconcilable expect to follow in their wake? Modern nations are built on the ruins of those that forgot God. Without doing better service for the Lord how can they anticipate a better fate? "The Lord is King forever and ever; the nations are perished out of His land." ¶

Notwithstanding God's merciful appeals and judicial warnings, the nations, even to the present day, make no response. Their procrastination resembles defiance. Not one on earth, in an official

¶ Psa. 10:16.

way, deigns to honor Jesus, the "great King," by admitting His authority and submitting to His will.

The angel in mid-heaven, cried, "The hour of His judgment is come." "The hour," a definite expression. The Lord told His disciples that "the times of the nations must be fulfilled." * His language makes it evident that their world policies have a time limit. Continued disrespect for Jesus and resentment to His reign make the guilt ponderous and the punishment imperative. Such presumption and antagonism must have an end.

Obstinacy under the light of the Gospel becomes intolerable. We live in the autumn of the ages. Beneath the autumn sun, the harvest ripens rapidly. Under the luscious light of the Gospel, character matures quickly; matures in righteousness, or in wickedness. The effect of the Gospel is "the savor of life unto life, or the savor of death unto death;"† recuperation or decomposition. This is as true of nations as of individuals.

When the harvest is ripe then it is reaped. The apostle heard one angel cry to another, saying, "Thrust in thy sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for the grapes are fully ripe.

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* Luke 21:24. † II Cor. 2:16.

And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the winepress of the wrath of God." ‡ When the cup of iniquity is full, the Lord rises in judgment. When the clock strikes the hour, He loses no time.

The fatal hour has evidently arrived; the judgment of the nations is doubtless begun. The powers have entered upon conditions of trouble and anguish unparalleled in history; yea, not merely unparalleled, but desperate and beyond human control. Calamities have become disasters, catastrophes, cataclysms. Violent and stupendous changes are frequently occuring among the nations, causing conditions unexpected and losses inconceivable. The powers are on a tempestuous sea without a compass. The past is no guide for the present; the present no assurance for the future; the future is veiled with darkness. What shall the end be?

In 1914 a shot was fired in central Europe, which became the signal for the world war. The nations have been in the stress of judgment ever since. From a hundred hilltops in France, all wreathed with flame and smoke and trembling like Sinai, the Lord in that war delivered sentence against the

‡ Rev. 14:19.

nations, and for years continued to execute judgment upon them. How else, in the light of God's Word, can the great calamity be interpreted?

Yet the judgment was tempered with mercy. From the stricken nations a wail of distress arose that pierced the sky. Then the Lord, in tender mercy, relented. The armistice was signed; the guns were silenced; the slaughter ceased. It was God's own truce; a temporary cessation of war to consider the possibility of peace,—peace on the Lord's own terms.

The Lord has given the powers time and opportunity to review the situation and discover His hand and purpose in the gigantic struggle. But they have not responded. They have been too blind to see the Lord in the war; too deaf to hear His voice pleading for peace on the basis of righteousness; too obtuse to recognize His claims or consider His terms. They have not even given Him credit for granting the truce. In their view it was merely an incident of the war, simply a matter of their own.

The Lord has been parleying with the nations ever sinec the armistice was signed. He has punctuated His appeals with warnings; has emphasized His arguments with alarming providences. His voice has been heard in famines, pestilence, earth-

quakes and clashes on the battle-field.

The Lord has delivered His ultimatum,—PEACE WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS. He enforces His ultimatum with indications of another war. If hostilities must be renewed, the war will necessarily be on a larger scale than hitherto and carried forward to a definite conclusion. It will end in a permanent victory for RIGHTEOUSNESS; the world will be placed under the banner of Jesus; He will reign without obstruction, without a competitor, without a cloud to darken the earth or dim His glory. § The nations will then have peace, and not till then. "We looked for peace, and there was no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble. ¶

The appeals of the Lord, powerful and pathetic as they are, seem to be lost on a perverse generation. When the guns ceased firing, God was quickly forgotten. Since then many peace conferences have been held, but in none of them have the Lord's terms been considered; at least no action has been reported.

Though all the nations have not directly antagonized Jesus as the world's Ruler, yet none has officially and publicly expressed its approval. With

§ Isa. 11:10. ¶ Jer. 14:19.

out exception they have been oblivious or opposed. Their hesitance makes the situation serious. What can be expected but that God's truce may expire any day?

The world war settled certain inter-national questions; but the relation of nations to Jesus was left unsolved. This issue must be definitely and permanently decided. Woe to our world, should the Lord Jesus, relinquish His royal rights, give up the conflict in dishonor! Earth would soon become the foreground of hell. Never can the nations attain to genuine peace till the Lord Jesus overcomes all opposition. The devil must be incarcerated in the bottomless pit and all his armies defeated. Then shall the nations have peace.

The powers that stand in the Lord's way, they that obstruct the coming of His kingdom, must yield to His will, or pass out of existence. According to the Word of God, the kingdom of Jesus shall fill the whole earth, leaving no room for competitors. "All nations which Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and shall glorify Thy name. For Thou art great, and doest wondrous things; Thou art God alone." *

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* Psa. 86:9.

The serious question is, Will the nations embrace the opportunity and forestall another war? Will they make wise use of God's truce? They can have peace without war by accepting the Lord's terms; or they can have peace after being crushed in another cataclysm. Which will they prefer? They have their choice. But let them beware of procrastination; eventide has arrived; their sun may go down in darkness. They should know by observation, that to continue their present policy is worse than lunacy; to oppose Jesus is pernicious folly. To conquer the Lord God Almighty, or nullify His authority, or even modify it, is entirely out of the question. "And the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." †

The present outlook makes patriots anxious for their country. Action, prompt action, radical action is an engrossing necessity. Will America accept the Lord's terms of peace? Will England and France and Italy and other powers? Yea, will as many as have received the Gospel yield to King Jesus and be saved? Will they surrender to

† Isa. 2:11.

Almighty God ere He arise to recall the truce and renew the war? Have the nations sufficient wisdom to place themselves under the great Sovereign and thereby terminate all war? Will they take timely action to prevent the crisis that is even now darkening the political sky?

The struggle on earth between right and wrong must have an end. Victory will not alternate from one side to the other for ever. Moral vacillation is intolerable; division of sovereignty between the Lord and the devil is unreasonable. At the present time, in the affairs of the world, it is Jesus and the devil; at a future day, it will be Jesus or the devil; the one or the other, but not both. Nor is there any doubt who shall be driven from the field. The devil must go, and with him all the powers that will not line up with Jesus; they that are not with Him are against Him. ‡

The day of decision is approaching; it may be near. One of the prophets of old saw it coming, and cried out, "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be

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‡ Matt. 12:30.

darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." §

Marvelous phenomena and terrifying events will appear, by which the presence and power of Jesus shall be made conspicuous. Vagueness concerning Him will terminate with astounding suddenness. The uncertainty of His reign over the nations will be cleared up amid appalling demonstrations of His power over men and nature. Only by loyalty to Jesus will any people be able to endure the splendors of that terrible glory.

America and Great Britain, to their advantage and credit, have incorporated into their systems of government much of Christ's teachings. While this is immensely valuable, it is not enough. A man may adopt the Decalogue as the rule of his conduct, and yet be deficient in his respect for its Author; he may merely be self-centered and self-respectful. Jesus cannot be well pleased, when His priceless lore is appropriated for law and He Himself discarded as Sovereign. He demands official and specific recognition by the nations; insists on a public expression of allegiance to Him as their King. "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye

§ Joel 3:14.

judges of the earth. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way." ¶

Yea, the nations should be enthusiastic in their devotion to King Jesus; even demonstrative in their allegiance to His throne. Listen to those who in ancient times understood the majesty of Christ Jesus, the greatness of His kingdom and the blessedness of His reign! Their souls arose in adoration and loftiest praise, singing, "Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and made a joyful noise unto Him with Psalms; for the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods." * "Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth, sing ye praises with understanding." †

The nations, even the most advanced, must take a wide step to get right with God. The leaders need vision, courage and mighty faith. They must be stirred with a passion of love for Jesus, with zeal for the Lord God of hosts, with enthusiasm like the flame that consumes the sacrifice on the altar. They must be men and women who can trust God and expect results which God alone can give. They need the ability to take the initiative in launching polit-

¶ Psa. 2:10. * Psa. 95:2. † Psa. 47:6.

ical enterprises vaster than any hitherto attempted. All this is needed to save the world from another catastrophe which is already terrorizing the human heart. Will the necessity be met and the tragedy averted?

History affords but little light for the unprecedented task; present conditions are as a midnight without a star. But we are not left in darkness. The Word of God is the great light, the sufficient light, the marvelous light. The Word in its twofold aspect,—the living Word which is Jesus, and the written Word which is the Bible,—gives ample light for the occasion. They who have courage to adventure will have light to proceed, if they walk and work in the light of the Word. But nothing less than devotion to Jesus and a passion for His cause will produce heroism and patriotism such as the present hour demands. The times call for consecration of the highest order; lives fully surrendered to the Lord; people in whom God dwells, through whom His own plan for the world will materialize. They who are filled with the Holy Spirit will lack neither light nor power; they will be available, efficient and successful.

Will the rulers have wisdom and courage to break relations with the past and occupy new ground?

Weightiest issues beckon them on; the life of the nations is in jeopardy. The times demand nothing short of the Christianization of national government. Jesus shall "put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He put all enemies under His feet." ‡

Will not the men in authority consider the danger and take immediate steps to conform civil government to the mind of Jesus? Secular government has been tried to the utmost and has ever proved a failure. It has been weighed in a balance a hundred times, and every time has been found wanting. Why will not the rulers use all legitimate means to place the state on the rock-foundation, which is Jesus Christ the Son of God and Saviour of the world? Immediate action is imperative; delay may spell disaster. Why will not officials employ their powers with a sense of responsibility to God?

Will not Christian patriots accept the task and risk conclusions? They may meet with temporary defeat. But civilization is at stake; the cause is worth a sacrifice. Their initial efforts may provoke criticism, even ridicule. They may be considered as a contemptible minority. But the Lord and His

‡ I Cor. 15:24.

hosts will be with them. They will be on the winning side; will be crowned as conquerors, "and more than conquerors" under Jesus Christ their leader. Such heroes will yet be honored as clear-sighted patriots; they will be placed on record as the pioneers of the New Earth. § Future generations will arise and call them blessed.

Will not America and Great Britain join hands in the work of the world's redemption? These are the leading powers. They are highly favored of God and united by many bonds. They possess eminent qualifications for the great undertaking. How weighty their responsibility in the world's emergency! By the hand of the Lord they have been placed at the front. Flooded with the gospel, refreshed with the Sabbath, adorned with schools and colleges, taught to pray in the name of Jesus, at liberty to walk in the ways of God and keep step with Him in working out His wonderful designs; how shall they escape if they evade the momentous issues by which they are confronted? Who knows why they are come to the zenith of power and influenec at such a time as this? ¶ Why will they not demonstrate the value of Christian government by

§ Isa. 65:17. ¶ Esth. 4:14.

adopting it for themselves? Why will they not prove God's Word by reaping the rich harvest of His favor. Wherefore do they hesitate? The world's safety depends on speedy action.

Secular government has always been defective in fundamentals, and a failure in its administration. It has ever been disastrous and a vexatious disappointment. Under secular government the nations have never risen above the possibility of jealousies, rivalries, revolutions, the horrors of the battle-field and the ghastly scenes of conquest and desolation. The rulers have never attained to what is possible for the well-being of the nations; the people have never reached the true standard of moral excellence, material success and personal happiness.

Secular government is obsolescent; it belongs to the barbaric ages. The vessel is a treacherous old hulk; it never was seaworthy; much less now amidst the billows and breakers of these turbulent times. The billion and eight hundred million passengers should be transferred without delay to the majestic liner, whose Captain is the Lord Jesus Christ. Postponement may cause record-breaking disasters.

Secular government can no longer be trusted. History does not furnish a single instance of success; the failures have been without exception. The

footprints of the victims have all been in one direction,—toward the cemetery of self-determined nations that forgot God in their self-will. Why will the powers of today persist in following the same road? Can they hope for a better fate? Will they not be victimized by the same beast? Faith in human policies fares like a kid in a menagerie of wild animals.

America faces a crisis and a task,—a world crisis and a Christian task. Likewise Great Britain and all the powers where the Gospel is preached. The work is urgent and brooks no delay. Civilization is imperiled; anarchy is undermining government; mis-rule is supporting anarchy.

Why do not Christian people arise and lift up the banner of Jesus in plain view of the whole earth? The prophet has said concerning Jesus, "He shall stand for an ensign of the peoples; to it shall the nations seek." * Let the royal rights of King Jesus be heralded; let His name and His fame be published; the nations will be attracted. They may take heart; hope may return; the world may be saved.

Again it is written, "And unto Him shall the

* Isa. 11:10.

gathering of the peoples be." † To the colors, O people of God! To the colors! Lift up the Gospel standard in sight of the world! Under the kingship of Jesus Christ the nations shall yet be rallied and ransomed.

What an opportunity for high-spirited service! Will not the followers of the Lord pause long enough to hear the voice of their Captain, as He shouts, "ATTENTION!" Will they not respond to the call of patriotism, of humanity, of God? O for a wide-awake church, eager for an enterprise that will tax her energies and prove her mission! O for a definite knowledge of God, that will impress the public and make men bow in His presence! O for a vivid consciousness of Jesus, the Superintendent of the world and all its people and affairs! O for a demonstration of Divine power that will convict the nations of their guilt and humble them in the sight of their great King! O thou Spirit of truth and power, come in Thy might; hasten to meet the world's extremity. Convince and convict the nations ere their madness become incurable.

"If the Lord be God, follow Him." "If" is a very small word; yet large enough to cast a shadow over

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† Gen. 49:10.

the greatest truth. How vague the world's knowledge of God! How shadowy His eternal verities! Is Jesus a real Person, or a mere concept? Is His Word the truth or is it a myth? Is He progressing toward His grand objective, or is His work a failure? Will not the Christian millions arise in the majesty of a fearless faith, and do the work that will remove the doubt? They who know their duty and shirk responsibility have a dark outlook. Hesitation may draw the sharpest lightning of the gathering storm. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." ‡

The unsympathetic and self-centered will not go unpunished. "And that servant, who knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to His will, shall be beaten with many stripes." §

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‡ Amos 6:1. § Luke 12:47.

IX

AMERICA AND THE WORLD COURT

> The hiding of the power which determines the destiny of the nations is not in the cabinets of kings or the heavy battalions of war, but in the closets of praying men, who have been raised by faith to the exalted rank of princes with God.
>
> —Daniel March, D. D.

A supreme tribunal, with jurisdiction over all the nations, is a modern necessity. Our world, through the aid of science, invention, business enterprises and Gospel activities, has become a neighborhood of nations. The cable, the wireless and the radio have brought all countries within speaking distance of each other. The mastery of the sea and of the air has made the people of all continents intimate associates. Friendly relationship is thereby greatly promoted; also liability to war is alarmingly increased.

In a practical sense, distance has been wonderfully minimized on our globe; yea, almost eliminated. Isolation has become impossible; separation is wholly impractical. The world must cher-

ish universal comity and cultivate international co-operation, or perish in her own progressiveness. Without peace and good-will, material success is exceeding dangerous.

The World Court is the child of a world-wide emergency. It has come to displace the sword as an arbiter and to restore peace on earth. Proximity, kinship, mutual interests and imminent dangers,—all plead with mighty eloquence for a permanent tribunal of international justice, in which the disputes and difficulties arising among the powers may be adjusted and war averted.

War has done its best, and its worst, as a pacifier and has utterly failed. War is human judgment side-tracked, that the military train, with its heavy freight of horrors, may have the right of way. War is reason lashed into frenzy, lost in insanity, surrendered to demons. God grant that the World Court may have the acumen and courage of an unerring and incorruptible judiciary and win the confidence of the world! May this Clearing House of the nations clear the political sky of all the dark clouds and bring sunshine to our storm-ridden world!

One essential, however, to ensure success is a correct standard of law and justice, by which the

nations may be judged and awarded. Without a true standard, failure is a foregone conclusion. Guided by expediency, or conducted in the spirit of favoritism, it will lose prestige and power, grope in darkness and perish in confusion.

And on the other hand, founded on the changeless principles of truth and right, and functioning in the fear of Almighty God, the World Court will prosper and have good success. If this judiciary be of God and work in harmony with Jesus, the Judge of judges, it will weather every storm and bless all nations. But if it be merely of man, rising no higher than humanitarian principles, the foundation will surely succumb; the structure will collapse; the crash will terrify the world. Not being built upon the rock, which is Christ Jesus, its existence will be but temporary; its services will be a disappointment. "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." *

The compendium of international law, as a basis of union and harmony among the nations, is not reliable. The concensus of the world's governments, as a standard, will be a disappointment. The best

* Matt. 7:27.

concept of human wisdom, as a guide, will be futile. The Word of God as the ultimate law, and the will of Jesus as the standard of authority, if duly recognized, will give the International Court dignity, stability and efficiency; and nothing else can. "By Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." †

The new tower will doubtless be another Babel if the Divine element be lacking. ‡ Through the anger of the Lord the builders will be confounded. "The Lord bringeth the counsel of the nations to nought; He maketh the devices of the peoples of none effect." § The exclusion of Jesus from the court will result in the confusion of tongues among the judges. The Wonderful Counselor is needed to give the wonderful counsel that will pacify the world. The Prince of Peace ignored, the dove of peace will scarcely find a place in that hall for the sole of her foot. "I am the Lord; that is My name; and I will not give My glory to another."¶ The Lord Jesus is the invisible Judge, standing in the assemblies of the mighty,** passing judgment upon the personnel, the procedure, the deliverances and effectiveness of

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† Prov. 8:16. ‡ Gen. 11:9. § Psa. 33:10. ¶ Isa. 42:8.
** Psa. 82:1.

the World Court. Therefore if the judges disown and dishonor Him, will He not reprove and confound them? Let them beware of Him Who has said, "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." ††

Will the United States of America take her place in the World Court? This is an important question; none more serious. Will our nation render service therein to the world according to her rank and power? Will she occupy a seat among the judges and use her influence to elevate the nations to conditions of peace, righteousness and prosperity? The answer is vital to herself and more than interesting to the world. How can she refuse? Why should she even hesitate?

Is there any nation more fit for the gigantic service, that may, by a judicial process, free the world from war? Should any be more ready to accept responsibility and contribute to such a philanthropic enterprise? To possess unlimited power, and yet stand aloof, watching the nations welter in their own blood,—that is not American. To see them battle with storm and tide and perish in the raging waves without rushing all available means to the rescue,—that is not humane. The nation that saves

†† Exo. 20:5.

its own life by withholding help from the perishing will lose its life with them that perish. ‡

Nothing but a moral reason, most cogent and convincing, can justify America in refusing to identify with the nations in the World's Court. Does such a reason exist? Alas, it is only too evident. A veto is in force; a prohibitive cause prevails; under present conditions wisdom forbids.

The World Court, on its present basis, presents no rational inducement to Americans to take part it is proceedings. Integral relationship would prove bad statesmanship; an unwarrantable adventure doomed to disappointment and failure.

The purpose of the World Court is grand, but the foundation is sand. When tested by coming events will the magnificent building stand? The basis is altogether inadequate; the wisdom of man is dangerous ground for such an establishment. A conglomeration of the world's jurisprudence, as a working basis, must be unsatisfactory. Even an eclectic system of international law, selected and arranged with utmost care, would be unsafe and unsound. Though human wisdom in our day may excel all former attainments, yet if it be trusted

‡ Luke 9:24.

alone, the light will go out in confusion and sorrow.§

Reason dictates that such an important and weighty structure should rest on bed-rock, which is nothing less and nothing else than the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.¶ Jurisprudence without Christian prudence is a bog; whatsoever is built thereon will sink. America, with Christian enlightenment, should have better judgment than to move into a building doomed to collapse.

Let America strictly avoid all national compacts that void the claims of Jesus. Her permanent safety, influence and usefulness depend on her right relation with the Lord. Jesus has said, "Apart from Me ye can do nothing."* Without Jesus, effort finally fails; the best success suffers shrinkage, falls far below normal. On the wall of the Nations' Judgment Hall, as it now functions, the hand-writing may be traced, "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." †

But America can in no wise be excused from a world-wide service. The nations are anxious for a solution of their perplexing problems. They are discouraged, distressed, distracted, almost in despair. The night grows dark; will the morning ever dawn?

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§ Isa. 50:11. ¶ I Cor. 3:11. * John 15:5. † Dan. 5:27.

By what means can the disturbing demons be cast out? How will the powers be brought to their right mind? America knows. Let her impart the information and help the world to apply the knowledge. The nations that have the Gospel of Jesus know. Let them accept His terms, publish His will and save the world.

In vain have the nations in their agony looked to councils, conferences, courts and leagues for relief. International diplomacy has failed. How shall the bleeding wounds be healed and health recovered? America has the knowledge; let her publish the remedy and apply the cure.

The land of Sabbaths and Bibles and churches has the balm; and the Physician is there. Jesus is the only Healer; the Gospel is the only remedy. Let America, from her high altitude among the nations, make answer in spirit and language befitting the cause; the world will listen. By radio and cable, by wire and wireless the news will be broadcasted and there will be joy. "And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." ‡ Great Britain, too, is Divinely qualified; her responsibility is heavy. O that the two were yoked

‡ Rev. 22:2.

together in the service! They could draw the world out of the slough of despond; in the name of Jesus they could lead the nations into the uplands of peace and righteousness.

O America, America, the world's crisis is thy opportunity! In the adjustment of international difficulties, wilt thou not employ the higher wisdom —the wisdom that is of God. Through the strength thou hast in Jesus Christ, great things may be attempted; unprecedented tasks may be accomplished; even the redemption of the nations of the whole earth may be the result of wise action.

America has the light. Pity her ethics were not more perfect, and her government unequivocally loyal to Jesus. Yet she has the knowledge; let her speak out. The nations will listen to her message. Let her voice be heard among the powers, proclaiming, "The Lord reigneth; the world also shall be established, that it cannot be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously." § She shall have a hearing.

O that America would adopt Bible principles of civil government! O that she would exemplify Christian statesmanship in the sight of the world!

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§ Psa. 96:10.

Then would she blaze the way through the tangled forests to the golden era of peace and happiness. She would soon have a following; a procession of nations would hasten to share in the same blessedness. "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord." ¶

Let America become the latter-day voice in the wilderness, saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."* Let America arise to the occasion; let Great Britain improve the situation; let any of the powers seize the opportunity. Let the King's highway be thus prepared; who knows how soon the thunder of His chariot will then be heard, as He hastens to save the world from the power of Satan and the dominion of evil! "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." †

A Christian form of government, administered in the Spirit of Jesus, will carry any power into worthy service and reasonable sacrifice for the welfare of mankind. And when the World Court, if it continue on the wrong foundation, shall be wrecked on the rock of secularism, and all other

¶ Isa. 2:3. * Isa. 40:3. † Hab. 2:14.

Christless organizations shall cease to exist, then shall the nations that have joined the league of the Lord be safe and happy. "Happy is that people that is in such a case as this; yea, happy is the people whose God is the Lord." ‡

‡ Psa. 144:15.

X

A LARGER PROGRAMME FOR THE WORLD'S SAFETY

If ye will walk in my statutes, and keep My commandments and do them, then will I give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase. But if ye will not harken unto Me and will not do all these commandments; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague.*—Moses, the man of God.

The world today is full of trouble and confusion for lack of knowledge; even bordering on despair for lack of the knowledge of Jesus Christ her Prince and Saviour. "Where there is no vision the people perish." † O for a vivid conception of the Lord's personality, presence and power! O for a lively sense of Christ's sovereignty over the nations and His goodness toward all people!

Not merely is Christianity itself needed, however clean and potent it may be; but also a realization of

* Lev. 26:3. and 26:14. † Prov. 29:18.

the life and love of Jesus throbbing in Christianity. Not only is a system of ethics and laws needed, even though it be beneficent and beautiful as the Golden Rule; but also a consciousness of the Lord's own Self personally illuminating and vivifying the laws and ethics. Not merely is good government needed, though it be faultless in form and administration; but also a cognizance of the Mighty King, living, moving and having His being in the governing power, awarding prizes to the obedient and imposing penalties on transgressors. Not only is the discovery of the laws of nature a great achievement laden with blessings for the human race; but also the discovery of Jesus in the midst of nature's forces, not merely sustaining and guiding their uniform action, but slowing down and speeding up, reversing and suspending them at pleasure. Jesus is the most real, most active, most necessary Person in the world; He ought to be best known and most trusted.

A correct knowledge of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is essential to the safety and stability of the world.‡ Let the nations become acquainted with their Divine Ruler; let them grow familiar with His kingly

‡ Job. 22:21.

qualities, understand His requirements and respect His will; then shall there be peace. And there shall be not merely a cessation of war, but deliverance from the long list of evils that distress the people and destroy the earth. §

War is always horrible. It stalks with mighty pomp across fair lands and over flourishing cities, leaving its broad path covered with desolation, darkness and death. Yet it is only one of the many horrors that harass the world. The plan for the abolition of war should include all disturbing elements, that mankind may breathe freely and fear nothing. The elimination of all agencies by which the people are distressed and despoiled is practical and by all means should be accomplished. ¶

The programme for the world's safety should therefore be comprehensive; yea, all-inclusive, far exceeding anything yet attempted. It should include famine, pestilence, earthquakes, fires, floods, tornadoes, typhoons, disasters of all kinds and every degree. All destructive forces should be suspended and eliminated, or harnessed and utilized. These are God's corrective providences. Transgression precedes correction; when the cause ceases, the curse will cease. *

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§ Ezek. 34:25. ¶ Isa. 11:6. * Isa. 55:13.

The recurring violence in the operation of nature's laws is the scourge of Almighty God. † Nor is the scourge ever used without just cause; moral necessity makes it imperative. God delights in mercy; judgment is His strange work; mercy flows freely; judgment comes with reluctance. But wickedness must be held in check; yea, absolutely controlled; by mercy if possible, by judgment if necessary. The Lord has not abandoned the world to let it take its own course; nor is He incompetent amidst the tremendous forces He has created. He possesses unlimited power; not a sparrow falls without His notice; ‡ not a mountain trembles but by His will. §

Man is not an innocent victim, helpless in the presence of catastrophes. His perversity releases the penalties stored away in nature, and, lo, he is crushed. And when crushed, an accusing voice resounds in his ears, saying, "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God?" ¶

Lawlessness is the father of calamities. The skeptic may ridicule the thought; but skepticism is moral insanity. The infidel, who cannot see God in nature, is blind as the man who cannot see the sun

† Isa. 28:17. ‡ Matt. 10:29. § Hab. 3:6. ¶ Jer. 2:17.

at mid-day in a cloudless sky. The breaks of nations and the freaks of nature are certainly within the power of the Almighty. They are permitted by reason of abounding sin; they are employed to suppress wickedness. They can be prevented by reconciliation to God, or protracted by persistent disobedience to His will. "He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and water-springs into dry ground; a fruitful field into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein." *

Jesus is "King of nations"; likewise He is Lord of nature. His power over the elements is unlimited. He can chain the lightning, or hurl it; † calm the storm, or ride it; ‡‡ quench the spark, or fan it; §§ water the fields, or parch them; ¶¶ stabilize the mountains, or overturn their foundations. ** A bona fide covenant with the Lord and fidelity therein will banish all horrors from the earth and restore peace and righteousness to the inhabitants of every land; †† security and prosperity will become universal. The promise of Divine care, which God gave to Israel, is valid today and may be appropriated by any nation. Thus hath He said, "And it

* Psa. 107:33. † Psa. 144:6. ‡‡ Psa. 18:10. §§ Deut. 32:22 ¶¶ Matt. 5:45. ** Psa. 18:7. †† Psa. 106:45.

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shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments, the Lord shall open unto thee His good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thy hand."‡

The threatenings, too, like the promises, are valid and vital. They are full of force and fire to avenge the violation of Divine law and bring just punishment upon the transgressor. Here is the sure alternative; "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not harken to the voice of the Lord thy God, the Lord shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with extreme burning, and with the sword, and they shall pursue thee until thou shalt perish." §

A nation is a moral person, a subject of God's moral law. The Decalogue is the Divine rule for national behaviour. Deviation from it brings chastisements; compliance with it brings benedictions. Obedience to Jesus is fundamental to the well-being of the powers; allegiance to His moral government is imperative to the world's safety. The standard is high, but nothing else is normal. A lower level

‡ Deut. 28:1. § Deut. 28:15.

involves liability to weakness, distress, poverty, pestilence, oppression, revolution, battle-fields and desolation. The way is left open for excess in sin; and excess in sin is a sure cause of punitive calamities.

Such calamities are intended to work a reformation and save the nations. They are the barbed mercies of God, designed to check evil and prevent ruin. Escape is still possible, even after the Lord has pronounced sentence. The Lord waits to be gracious, saying, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against which I have pronounced, turn from their evil way, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." ¶

The Lord's method of inflicting providential chastisements does not imply that all who suffer are equally guilty. In society the people are intimately united; their interests are inter-braided. Nations and communities in the sight of God are regarded as units. In this respect whatever befalls one person may extend to many. "As the sun shineth upon the just and the unjust;" * so the

¶ Jer. 18:7. * Matt. 5:45.

desolating storm sweeps the fields of the innocent and the impenitent. But in moral effect the difference is wide. The calamity proves a blessing to the righteous; to the wicked man it becomes a curse. The one is humbled; the other hardened. The one is drawn nearer to God; the other is driven farther away. Corrective providences may not redeem the community; yet they who trust in the Lord will be benefitted. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."†

The forces of nature are all at God's command. Fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind and sweeping flood,—all are in His service, "fulfilling His word." ‡ When Egypt refused to obey the Lord, He sent swarms of flies, clouds of locusts, electrical storms, pestilence and death. § When Israel did violence to a tributary people, the Lord sent three years of famine to remind the nation of the injustice; when the wrong was recognized and a requital rendered, the land yielded her harvests. ¶

Nature is the Lord's great arsenal, stored with Divine munitions, to be used upon all who abandon themselves to wickedness. When men were too

† II Pet. 2:9. ‡ Psa. 148:8. § Exo. 8:24.
¶ II Sam. 21:1.

cruel or too foul to be accorded the privilege of life, the Lord sent the Deluge; beneath that overflow of water "all flesh died that moved upon the earth," except one ship load. ** When Sodom and Gomorrah became lawless and indecent beyond endurance, the Lord rained fire and brimstone upon them; all were devoured by the enswirling flames except one family. "And no judgment," says a notable writer, "has yet befallen the world, compared with the judgment that may at any time be revealed."

Nature is also the Lord's provision house, stored with the bounties of His goodness, sufficient for all people in every land, and accessible to all generations. The abundance, variety and richness are beyond conception. Loyalty to Jesus is the key that opens this storehouse. "The nation that keepeth the truth may enter in;"‡ she carries the key.

God's Word to His people Israel applies to all nations that observe the required conditions. He says to each and everyone, "All these blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt harken unto the voice of the Lord thy God." § O earth, earth, take heart and be of good cheer! Though bleeding at a thousand wounds and crushed

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** Gen. 7:21. ‡ Isa. 26:2. § Deut. 28:2.

beneath ten thousands burdens; though wearied and fainting in the rough and rugged road you travel; the Lord thy God is with thee; fear not, neither be dismayed.

O ye nations, "tossed with a tempest, and not comforted,"¶ be of good courage. Put the Lord to the test by obeying His voice. His word has gone forth; it shall not return to Him void. "The Lord is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath He said, and will He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" *

No blessing has yet come upon the world that may be compared with the blessings that are waiting for the nations to get right with God. The larger programme for the protection of the world, for the safety and happiness of all the inhabitants, is surely in order. O for the men of faith and wisdom, men of action and power, who, in the name of the Lord Jesus, will give it form and put it over!

¶ Isa. 54:11. * Num. 23:19.

XI

THE FINAL DOWNFALL OF ALL INCORRIGIBLE NATIONS

> God's purpose to give the world, through His people, civil and religious liberty, and to work His will for the enrichment of the race, was sufficient justification for ridding the world of this wicked and unrepentant people.
>
> —L. Robinson, M. A., Ph. D.

Prophecy is quite definite respecting a future crisis. From the Bible we learn that a disaster is coming, which, in extent and havoc, will exceed all that has ever occurred since the days of Noah unless it be prevented. Its prevention seems yet to be a possibility,—a bare possibility. Repentance toward God and submission to Jesus Christ, the King of nations, would be sufficient to turn back the threatening calamity. But will the powers repent and submit in time to escape?

The Lord's pronouncement does not always commit Him to corresponding action. When He gave

judgment against Nineveh, the preaching of Jonah wrought repentance and saved the city. While the Lord is merciful and the impending danger tarries, how earnestly and incessantly should Christian people plead with the nations and entreat the Lord, that the great distress be averted!

The world war was both judgment in execution and an urgent admonition to bring the nations to repentance. If the warning go unheeded, how can they escape the wrath that is to come? The iniquity cannot go unpunished; the predicted wrath will surely take effect. The Lord is not slack, as some men count slackness.

The desperate war simply demonstrated the madness of the nations in their effort at self-government independent of Jesus. It emphasized their duty to take counsel from the "Wonderful Counselor," and submit to His will. Peace does not spring from culture, nor safety from national agreements, nor mutual welfare from international covenants. Security lies in the character of the rulers; and character is reliable only when radiant with the Gospel and unequivocally loyal to Jesus on the throne that rules the world. The horrors of the late struggle were the legitimate outcome of national prosperity when the Lord is forgotten.

The war will not have been in vain if at least some of the nations have learned to take their stand with Jesus. None has yet taken that decisive step; but the world is not without indications in that direction. Such will be the outcome as seen by the prophet in his vision of the final conflict. He foresaw the world divided into two camps. The incorrigible powers were all united in a league against the Church of Christ; the evangelized forces rallied in her defence. He speaks of ten powers, saying, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. And they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful." †

The ultimate design of the incorrigibles will be the utter extinction of the Church of God; their objective will be nothing short of the overthrow of Christianity and the elimination of the name of Jesus from the face of the earth.

But Jesus will not fail to have His army mobilized and ready; yea, "armies," ‡ prepared to meet the situation and sufficient for the supreme crisis. The nations favored with the Gospel will furnish the recruits for the Lord. Having accepted His

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† Rev. 17:14. ‡ Rev. 19:14.

terms of peace they will be in position to serve under His banner in the great emergency.

Christian people will be ready once more, as they had often been before, to adventure their lives for Christian liberty and the testimony of Jesus Christ. No sacrifice will be accounted too great to suffer for their Lord when His cause is in jeopardy. In that generation, when the crisis is reached, the spirit of the martyrs will reappear. The heroes of the cross will be loyal to Jesus at any cost; will follow Him on any field. "And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed with fine linen, white and clean." §

In its last analysis the crucial conflict is between Jesus and the devil. It began in Eden and has continued ever since, growing in intensity and desperation; and it never was more acute than at the present day. The devil knows that his time is short; ¶ his cause is hopeless; his case is desperate. Evidently he is acquainted with the Bible and understands prophecy. He doubtless is aware of his doom and faces it with savage determination.

The devil is strongly fortified in all secular governments and false religions. He exerts a subtle

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§ Rev. 19:14. ¶ Rev. 12:12.

influence over every unregenerate soul on earth; he has a strong following. He has formed an alliance with two other mighty powers for military purposes. The three are in Scripture designated, "The beast, the false prophet, and the dragon." * These constitute the malignant trinity.

The "beast" in prophecy is a symbol of the rulers, who administer government without regard to the Higher Power. Daniel in a vision saw four beasts, a lion, a bear, a leopard and "another!" † His interpreter said, "These beasts are four kings." The animal never rises above its own instinct. In secular government human instinct is the mainspring of action. That form of government is independent of God; at best it never rises above humanitarian principles. Whether civilized or pagan it acts the beast. Such is one of the three allies which constitute the malignant trinity.

The "false prophet" is the representative of false religions and all imitations of the true. He poses as a spiritual teacher, claiming authority over the souls of men and power to seal their eternal destiny. The false prophet holds sway over countless multitudes. The heathen world with its billion souls

* Rev. 16:13. † Dan. 7:7.

responds to his counsel, is subject to his autocratic will, at least to a dangerous degree. Also no small proportion of the people in Gospel lands are under his influence. Such is the second party in the infernal alliance.

The dragon, "that old serpent, which is the devil,"‡ seems to be chief among the three. The supreme command is in his hand. He is recognized as the generalissimo of the allied forces. Beside his authority over the beast and the false prophet with their armies, he is in full control of hell. All the legions of the lower regions are subject to his will. These war-worn veterans of the under-world have seen service on a thousand battle-fields and have never lost a fighter. They are all on the muster roll, ready to take part in the conflict that will shake the foundations of the world. The entire forces and resources of the beast, the false prophet and the devil will be engaged in that gigantic struggle.

Evidently the devil understands the import of the approaching struggle. It will be his final battle to retain power over the nations and the world. His kingdom on earth is at stake; the day of decision

‡ Rev. 20:2.

draws nigh; the clash of contending forces will soon be heard; the victory that hitherto alternated from one line to the other will now be final. § If the devil be defeated he will be despoiled of his laurels and of his freedom; will be driven from the earth and consigned to solitary imprisonment. ¶ It is all on record; he knows it full well; he searches the Bible; he has learned what is "written." Therefore he will leave no stone unturned to win the fight, or to wreak vengeance on the human race.

Already is the devil mobilizing his forces and preparing his munitions of war. His objective is the overthrow of Jesus and the utter annihilation of His kingdom on earth. To accomplish this he will spare no pains. Against Jesus and His Church the prodigious armies of anarchy and infernal ferocity are massing for the desperate drive. The prophet in vision witnessed their maneuvering and said, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. *

At this juncture the Lord Jesus gives a new demonstration of His personal presence and omnipotent power in providence. The apostle sees Him appear-

§ Rev. 19:20. ¶ Rev. 20:3. * Rev. 19:19.

ing in awful majesty as a military chieftain. He is Captain of the hosts of God. He is mounted on a white horse. † He wears the crown of authority as a helmet; He wields a sharp sword with terrific effect; on His vesture and on His thigh glitters the royal insignia, "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS;" His army, "the called and chosen and faithful," follow Him. Over the battle-field He dashes; upon His enemies He rushes; His sword smites with fearful execution; His garments are red with blood. ‡

What a strange spectacle! What surprising procedure! Can this indeed be Jesus the Saviour of the world? Surely conditions have become desperate when the gentle Lamb § has become a raging Lion. ¶ How can such action be justified?

The justification of Jesus on this momentous occasion is the alignment of the incorrigible nations under the devil against the Lord and His church, to effect her total annihilation and His utmost humiliation. "And they gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army." **

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† Rev. 19:11. ‡ Rev. 19:13. § Rev. 5:6.
¶ Rev. 5:5. ** Rev. 19:19.

The prophet Joel in vision saw this dread event afar off. He writes like a reporter, describing what he saw and heard. He listens while the Lord issues His challenge to the incorrigible nations, saying, "Proclaim this among the nations; Prepare for war, wake up the mighty men, let the men of war draw near. Beat your plowshares into swords; let the nations be wakened up and come to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." †

Long, long had the Lord pleaded, remonstrated, threatened, chastised; but the nations would not repent and return unto the Lord. Now the day of grace is gone; the sun is set. "The harvest is past and the summer is ended." ‡ The hour for judgment has arrived. The incorrigibles were determined to maintain their independence of Jesus, even at the cost of a war with the Almighty. He meets

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† Joel 3:9. ‡ Jer. 8:20.

them with a challenge; the day of decision has come; the issue must be settled now and for ever.

The prophet mentions the valley of Jehoshaphat. The historic battle known by that name may illustrate and explain the coming conflict, in which war will culminate, then terminate through its own rapaciousness.

Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah. § Judah was the only kingdom that worshipped the true God. The kingdoms round about were hostile; they formed a league for the extermination of Judah. They issued a general invitation which became their bond of union. They said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance."¶ Ten nations formed the alliance. They massed a powerful army on the borders of Judah.

King Jehoshaphat knew he had no army to cope with such an enemy. He was deeply distressed. In his trouble he appealed to the Lord for counsel and help. The answer filled his heart with courage. Immediately he led his few troops toward the foe. While drawing near he halted and called his choir to the front to sing a Psalm of praise to the Lord.

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§ II Chron. 20:1. ¶Psa. 83:4.

He evidently expected the singers to have an important part in winning the victory. †

While the sacred music was echoing among the rocks, a fierce mania struck the enemy; discipline utterly failed; their ranks were in wild confusion; a mutual slaughter occurred; the broad field was covered with the dead; they fell by their own hand. Judah had won the battle without drawing a sword. The choir did it; their weapon was a Psalm. ‡

The Valley of Jehoshaphat! Will it have its counterpart in the final war? Yea, doubtless; yet the first will be only a miniature of the last; the latter will be out of all proportion to the former. The victory however may be won after the same manner.

The scene of battle is not on record in The Revelation. The prophet kindly omits mention of the collision of forces. That shock of battle on record would shock the world. But the field of carnage under his skilful pen appears with graphic and ghastly vividness. § The ground upon which the armies maneuvered and forced the issue with Jesus is covered with the slain. The kings have fallen and their mighty generals, the official staff and the brave

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† II Chron. 20:21. ‡ II Chron. 20:22. §Rev. 19:18.

captains, the infantry and the cavalry; companies, regiments and armies lie mangled and mingled; the crimson field, as far as the eye can carry, is strewn with the fallen. There they lie all silent and pulseless.

The gigantic struggle is over; the shouting of captains has ceased; the fierce cry of charging troops has died away. The groans of the wounded and moans of the dying have subsided; the stillness of death prevails. The silence is broken only by the caws of the crows and the screams of the vultures that darken the sky and cover the field; they never before had such a feast. "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in mid-heaven, Come, and gather yourselves together, unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." ¶

Such will be the end of the final war on earth. The victory of righteousness over iniquity will be decisive and permanent. Jesus will hold the field,

¶ Rev. 19:18.

His powerful rival will disappear. The world will enjoy profound tranquility; the nations henceforth will be at peace.

In Scripture the mention of "The Valley of Decision" is quite significant. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. For there will I sit to judge all the nations round about." * The mastery of the world will then be settled; the power of Jesus will be demonstrated; His kingship will be approved; the hard problems of government will be solved; all will be decided on the basic principles of righteousness; the world shall then have peace.

When the battle is over, where shall we then look for the malignant trinity? The beast, the false prophet and the dragon, where are they?

Secular government, the beast; spurious religion, the false prophet; these and the organizations by which they were supported are utterly destroyed; "cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." † They will trouble the nations no more.

But the devil, having done his best and worst to corrupt the earth and waste the nations, seeks safety in ignoble flight. ‡ The skulking coward! He finds

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* Joel 3:14. † Rev. 19:20. ‡ Rev. 20:1.

no asylum. An angel from heaven, with the speed of lightning, is on his trail. He is arrested, placed in chains, locked up in darkness to flounder in the bottomless abyss, deprived of power and liberty a thousand years. §

The great conflict ends in the overthrow of all incorrigible powers. They would not submit to Jesus; hence their destruction became a moral necessity and their recovery an utter impossibility.

What a world this will be when there is no devil abroad to deceive the nations and destroy the people! What goodness and gladness, what peace and safety, what progress and prosperity, what blessed families and flourishing churches, what thrifty business and jubilant nations! How great the glory of God! How triumphant the kingdom of Christ! How complete the happiness of man!

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§ Rev. 20:3.

XII

THE RE-CONSTRUCTION OF SOCIETY

> The apostle rises above the confusion, puts the trumpet to his lips, and with a blast of judgment for the enemy, and with the poetic music for the faithful, he helps the trembling soul of the Church to see through its tears the new heaven and the new earth.
>
> "Gates and Keys to Bible Books."
>
> —Dr. Robinson.

The final conflict between right and wrong will strew a large portion of the earth's surface with ruins. All powers antagonistic to Jesus shall be broken, as a potter's vessel beneath a "rod of iron"; * all organizations independent of Jesus will fall. The crash will be appalling; the wreckage fearful. The Christless institutions are many and mighty; their overthrow will fill cities and countries with debris; heaps upon heaps, with multitudes buried beneath the rubbish. The Lord with reference to this event has given warning, saying, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also

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* Psa. 2:9.

heaven. And this signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."†

On that occasion a new revelation of Jesus in His judgments, and a terrible display of His anger against wickedness, will astound the world. The incorrigible nations, in their pride and self-will, would not bow to Jesus, while He dealt with them in mercy. Now the tables are turned. The powers are prostrated; the overthrow is both humiliating and irrevocable. At the brightness of the Lord's coming, at the piercing glance of His eye, the proud potentates are troubled; their glory fades; their courage melts. "And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth." ‡

The destruction of secular governments and false religions will liberate the masses from the thraldom of mis-rule and the bondage of vain worship. The

† Heb. 12:26. ‡ Isa. 2:17.

people long held in captivity will be suddenly released. In their unexpected freedom they will be as sheep without a shepherd. But not long. The blind leaders having perished, worthy and competent successors will quickly appear. The Lord will have able men and abundant means in readiness.

Having foretold the defeat of the malignant trinity, and the destruction of their armies and organizations, the prophet continues to relate his vision. He says, "And I saw thrones." § The thrones were seats of authority prepared for the new incumbents. How the thrones were established is not revealed, but the fact of their existence is positively affirmed. The Lord, by Whom all just power is ordained, is equal to the occasion He has created. "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south; but God is Judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another." ¶

"And they sat upon them," ** he continues. Who sat upon them? Who are these persons that occupy the seats of honor and authority? From whence came the distinguished officials, so suddenly promoted to restore order and rule the world? The prophet at this point takes no time to explain. He

§ Rev. 20:4. ¶ Psa. 75:6. ** Rev. 20:4.

seems to assume that the casual observer will identify them at a glance.

"And judgment was given unto them," †† the seer adds. The new officials were not usurpers; they had not seized power; they had received it. The authority was given and they accepted the gift. It had come from the legitimate source, which is Almighty God. The medium of communication is not mentioned; the Lord can use extraordinary means for unprecedented occasions.

"Even the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God." ‡ Thus the character of the new rulers, not the personnel, is described. These evidently are not the dead resurrected, but the dead personified. The martyrs of Jesus will not appear on earth for action on that spectacular occasion, but they will be duplicated. They who have fallen asleep in Jesus will not be raised to inaugurate the millennium, but their equals will be on the ground ready for service. The choicest men and women the world ever saw will be matched.

Jesus gives us the key to this difficult passage. When referring to John the Baptist, He said that

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†† Rev. 20:4. ‡ Rev. 20:4.

John was Elijah. § John, being interrogated on the subject, declined the honor, saying, " I am not Elijah." ¶ How reconcile the apparent contradiction? We must admit that both spake the truth. The only reasonable explanation is this: John was not Elijah in person, but he was by personification. John ministered in "the spirit and power of Elijah."*

According to prophecy the decisive struggle between right and wrong clearly involves a persecution. The desperate attempt of the incorrigible powers to extirpate the Church of Christ will be promptly met by brave men and women. That generation will produce martyrs, who will cheerfully jeodardize everything they possess for the cause of Jesus and seal their testimony with their blood. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death." †

The prophet on this occasion speaks of the "marriage of the Lamb." ‡ Marriage is a sacred bond uniting husband and wife; a covenant binding them together for life. In symbolic language Jesus is the Bridegroom and the Church is His Bride. §§ The

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§ Matt. 11:14. ¶ John 1:21. * Luke 1:17. † Rev. 12:11 ‡ Rev. 19.7. §§ John 3:29.

Church will be unified and fitted for the terrific struggle by entering into a covenant with her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This will be an event of greatest interest; the enthusiasm will be intense. In anticipation of it the Church is heard, exclaiming, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." ¶

The Holy Spirit will descend upon that generation of believers with mighty power. The Church will be noted for purity, harmony and enthusiasm; the people for consecration, holiness and self-sacrifice. The spiritual radiance of their lives will light up the surrounding darkness. "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints." **

The covenant will emphasize one great principle, the sovereignty of Jesus. This will be the supreme test of loyalty to Jesus who is Lord over all. To subscribe the covenant will imply complete surrender to the Lord, service for Him to the limit and testimony for Him at any cost. The stern requirement will doubtless sift the Church and greatly

¶ Rev. 19:7. ** Rev. 19:8.

reduce her statistics. And yet the faithful will be very numerous. The prophet, as if unable to speak in figures, or even give an estimate, exclaims as if in a rapture of astonishment, "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." ††

The great tribulation will reproduce the martyr spirit as in the olden times. Powerful men will arise again on behalf of Jesus Christ, when His Church is in peril and His name has become an execration. Samuel and David, Peter and Paul, Knox and Luther, Cargill and Renwick; these and others of their caliber and faithfulness will have worthy successors in prodigious numbers. The Lord is able to raise up His mighties for the emergency. "And he that is feeble among them shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord." ‡

When the distress is over, the battle-scared veterans of Jesus will be found in every land, qualified and willing to take up the work of re-construction. To them will be committed the re-organization of

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†† Rev. 19:6. ‡ Zech. 12:8.

the nations that fell in the great overthrow; they will be entrusted with the government of the world. "And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." §

"And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." ¶ These faithful servants of the Lord will constitute civil government on the basis of Christ's authority and associate with Him in its administration. They will exalt the nations from the pestilential grounds of secularism to the bright table-lands of righteousness and the fear of God. They will reign "with Christ"; will officiate on the moral heights where Jesus Himself administers the laws of His kingdom. Then for the first time in history will the government of the world be elevated to its legitimate place, and its dignity as an ordinance of God be recognized and respected. Then will the rulers universally take their stand with Jesus their King, be clothed with His power, officiate in His name and honor Him as the Judge to Whom they must give account. "Yea, all the kings shall

§ Dan. 7:27. ¶ Rev. 20:4.

fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him."*

"And they shall reign a thousand years." † This Christian dynasty will continue ten centuries. The honored veterans, entrusted with the re-construction of society, will live their day, do their work and pass on. Like all preceding generations, "they will go the way of all the earth." Men will come and go just as in former times, only on a higher plane of efficiency and honor. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed" ‡

During the millennium, the world will be at its zenith of blessedness; the ten centuries will be the table-lands of happiness and prosperity. The chief feature of that happy age will be the manifestation of the presence and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."§

When Jesus came in His incarnation, the world was asleep; He was saluted only by a few shepherds. When He comes to claim the nations as His inheritance, the world will be awake; He will

* Psa. 72:11. † Rev. 20:4. ‡ Isa. 65:20. § Hab. 2:14.

get an ovation. King David, "the sweet Psalmist of Israel," in vision saw the great event, and the demonstrations of excessive joy. In poetic strains of matchless sublimity he personifies inanimate creation greeting the Lord with songs of praise. All nature is intensely excited; outbursts of admiration and gladness arise from every quarter. On this occasion it is creation that shouts, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." ¶ The heavens are jubilant and the earth triumphant; the sea lifts up its voice and the waves clap hands; the deep forests pour forth their anthems and the trees wave their salutations; the hills rejoice and the fields sing their pastoral songs. *

But wherefore such universal rejoicing? The jubilant myriads return answer: "Because He cometh; He cometh to judge the earth; He shall judge the world with righteousness and His people with the truth" †

Jesus will then for the first time receive due honor as the illustrous King of the world. ‡ He will be the center of attraction in every community; the One

¶ Matt. 21:9. * Psa. 96:11. † Psa. 96:13. ‡ I Tim. 6:15.

altogether lovely and worthy of universal praise; the blessed Mediator, through whose sacrifice and intercession the world has admission into the presence and favor of God.

Jesus, in new manifestations of His goodness and greatness, will be present in each locality and interested in every country in the world. He will be personally recognized everywhere, yet appearing visibly nowhere. "If any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, He is there, believe him not." § No place will monopolize His fellowship; no city will enjoy preferred favoritism; no country will be the central state from which will emanate His laws and administration of government. "For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven, so shall also the Son of man be in His day."¶

The final victory of Jesus over Satan will be followed by marvelous results; the general destruction of organized evil on earth will make way for surprising consequences; the changes will be well nigh miraculous. At one and the same time the world will be rid of man's monstrous mis-rule and God's righteous retributions. The former will no longer

§ Mark 13:21. ¶ Luke 17:24.

be permitted; the latter will no longer be needed. No more shall nation lift up sword against nation;* neither shall the sword of the Lord devour flesh.† No more will the heavens be brass and the earth powder. No more will the fields be parched and the harvests fail. No more will the seas swallow down fleets and the waves engulf cities. No more will earthquakes crush the people amidst the ruins of their own homes. The enemies of God and humanity have been judged; the destroyers of the earth have been destroyed; the devil and his hosts have beeen overthrown; the world is at rest under the reign of King Jesus.

The inhabitants of all lands have learned righteousness and the Lord has been pleased to withdraw His judgments. Henceforth unmixed blessings and uninterrupted prosperity for all nations. Creation sings her new song,—"We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and hast reigned."‡

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* Isa. 2:4. † Deut. 32:42. ‡ Rev. 11:17.

XIII

APPEAL

Never was the world in greater need of competent and trusty leaders; never were the leaders in greater need of consecration to Jesus and illumination by the Holy Spirit. The task of bringing the nations into possession of the promised inheritance calls for a mighty force of workers. Will not the Church of Christ arise in the power of Almighty God and accept the challenge of the ages? The people, who know their God and are strong to do exploits, are in demand. How imperative the call for such as have faith, vision, courage; who have spirit to initiate astounding enterprises and power to put them over; who have perseverance that will end in success, or in self-sacrifice. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives even unto the death." §

Will not the friends of Jesus, the mighty millions who are devoted to His cause, voice His name, proclaim His rights, reveal His presence, declare His

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§ Rev. 12:11.

glory, wax strong in testifying, increase in zeal and intenseness till His kingdom come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven? ¶ Will they not conduct a campaign of publicity with eagerness and enterprise, till the great Lord of heaven be realized on earth to its remotest bounds? Will they not continue the service of love and sacrifice of faith, till a holy dread fall upon men everywhere and they worship the living and true God? Then may the world be checked in its mad rush after wealth, pleasure and pernicious freedom; then may the nations be saved from a fatal plunge into lawlessness and avoid an overwhelming cataclysm.

When men begin to think seriously, intelligently and hopefully, Jesus will promptly have His right place in society and be honored as King and Saviour of the world; and there shall be peace. To this end the Lord speaks with stern authority, saying, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." * O that the nations would listen! With melting earnestness He continues, "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; why will ye die?" † O that the nations would consider! His merciful entreaties being disregarded, again His voice is heard, rising this time like peals of thunder, loud enough to paralyze the

¶ Luke 11:2. * Exo. 20:3. † Eze. 33:11.

mightiest powers, saying, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted on the earth." ‡ Will not the ambassadors of the great King faithfully and fearlessly deliver His message—a message fraught with dread significance? While the day of mercy lasts will they not plead with God and man for the reconciliation that will save the world? The nations may humble themselves in the dread Presence, ere they be consumed in the fierce anger. The sun has not yet gone down.

In tenderest tones of love the Lord still pleads: "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."§

Jesus is the "Bright and Morning Star." ¶ Without Jesus and His beneficent reign, the nations will never see the bright morning. O let the world be pointed to the Star! It heralds the coming of an auspicious day bringing peace and safety to all peoples.

The name of Jesus is "as ointment poured forth,"* It is fragrant enough and sufficiently abundant to perfume the whole world. Let the aroma spread; it may captivate the nations and be their salvation.

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‡ Psa. 46:10. § Isa. 45:22. ¶ Rev. 22:16. * Song 1:3.

"His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed.

"And blessed be His glorious name for ever; and and let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen, and Amen." †

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† Psa. 72:17.

THE END.

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